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JESUS AMABILIS

A BOOK FOR DAILY PRAYER

BY

FRANCESCA GLAZIER

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JESUS AMABILIS

I

JESUS IN CREATION

I. "IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was nothing made that was made" (*S. John i. 1-3*). And God spake; and the Word of God is Jesus. So Love created me. Love desired my existence. Love desired my correspondence to Love. O my soul, by love thou wast created, and for love alone, to the end that thou mightest love thy Creator, and return thereby to Love who created thee. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus in good works, which God hath prepared that we should walk in them" (*Eph. ii. 10*).

II. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. As he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in his sight in charity. Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ unto himself; according to the purpose of his will: unto the praise of the glory of his grace, in which he hath graced us in his beloved Son" (*Eph. i.*).

"From God to man, from earth to heaven, love alone unites and fills all things. It is the beginning, the middle, and the end of things. Who loves knows, who loves prays, who loves devotes himself, who loves is satisfied" (*Lacordaire*).

III. "The heavens shall confess thy wonders, O Lord: and thy truth in the Church of the saints. For who in the clouds can be compared with the Lord: or who among the sons of God shall be like unto God? O God who is glorified in the assembly of the saints: great and terrible above all them that are about him. O Lord God of hosts, who is like to thee? Thou art mighty, O Lord, and thy truth is round about thee. Thou rulest the power of the sea: and appeasest the motions of the waves thereof. Thine are the heavens, and thine is the earth: the world and the fulness thereof thou hast founded: the north and the sea thou hast created" (*Ps. lxxxviii.*).

IV. "In the beginning, O Lord, thou foundedst the earth: and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish but thou remainest: and all of them shall grow old like a garment: and as a vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art always the selfsame, and thy years shall not fail" (*Ps. ci.*). God is the cause of all our life, our unconscious and conscious movement. If for a moment God withdraws His presence, movement ceases at once. He is the cause of our intellectual movement, our natural attributes. The cause of our moral life, our will; of our supernatural life, grace. Every movement,

then, is made by means of God. In Him we live and move and are.

V. "Natural events are necessary; hence God is their author; hence God wills them; hence we must accept them such as they are, with resignation, courage, and even joy, as we must accept the will of God itself, of which these are but the visible manifestation. The will of God is the divine *beneath* of all reality. It is that which produces, preserves, governs. It is the sovereign action, of which material realities are but the bark, of which the present moment is but the living and acting manifestation. It is the will of God which moves in the rolling spheres, which smiles in the flower and thunders in the tempest, which shines in the sun, which thrills and stirs in universal life. In fine, the will of God is an immense ocean, the waves of which break upon the banks of creation, bringing to all being and life, movement, order, and sensation" (*Bernies*).

VI. "Aspire ceaselessly to and approach God; be aware practically that your soul has need to be perpetually made and achieved by God, and that for you to withdraw from God is to cast away your being, to empty yourself, to become less and less a living entity. It is only by prayer that you can approach God, your supreme goal, for prayer is the elevation, the ascension of the soul to God, the movement of the creature towards the Creator, of the finite towards the infinite. Prayer is winged love" (*Fr. Raphael of the Immac. Conc., C.D.*). Let us then approach God, who condescends to ineffable sweetness to draw us; to all goodness

and mercy, all beauty and love, to conquer us; all wisdom and power to direct and sustain us; all tenderness and weakness to raise and console us; all suffering and fatigue, to strengthen and heal us.

VII. "O delights of the hidden life of Nazareth, of the interior life, hidden in God, which passes in intimate silence and solitude, of prayer and contemplation at the feet of Jesus-Host ! The workshop of Joseph was a tabernacle filled with the divinity; his soul was absorbed in God; his entire thought entirely in Jesus, his heart all for Jesus, and his will seeking and willing nothing but Jesus ! S. Joseph lived in God and he lived by God " (*Faure*). We must not for a single moment forget that God is about us, that the universe is the temple of His divinity, and He is nowhere absent; above all we must not forget that He lives in us, that He is in possession of our most secret being, in the silence and the mystery of faith.

II

JESUS THE LIGHT

I. "JESUS therefore said to them: Yet a little while the light is among you. Walk whilst ye have the light, that the darkness overtake you not. And he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst ye have the light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. . . He that believeth in me, doth not believe in me,

but in him that sent me; and he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world; that whosoever believeth in me, may not remain in darkness. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world " (*S. John*).

II. " In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. And this is the judgment: because the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light: for their works were evil. For every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God " (*S. John i., iii.*). " For with thee is the fountain of light; and in thy light we shall see light " (*Ps. xxxv.*).

III. " For thou lightest my lamp, O Lord: O my God, enlighten my darkness " (*Ps. xvii. 29*). " Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me in thy mercy " (*ibid., xxx. 17*). " Again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true both in him and in you: because the darkness is passed, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no scandal in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth; because the darkness hath blinded his eyes " (*I S. John ii.*).

IV. The two disciples, as they went to Emmaus, still loved their Master, though they were troubled at His death, and their faith was wavering. Then Jesus joining them, inquired into the cause of their sadness, and patiently He listened to their account of His Passion, and of the grief and doubt which had overwhelmed their spirits. And the good Master, with infinite tenderness and minutely, expounded to them the Word of God, beginning at Moses and all the prophets. He illuminated their minds concerning the sufferings of the Christ. Their hearts were comforted, and they constrained Him to remain with them. But as yet their eyes were holden. And, while He sat at table, Jesus took the bread, and brake, and gave it to them. Then, before this mystery of love, their eyes were opened; they saw Him; they knew Him. All that had been dark to them became light. The Passion which had saddened them was now Light! The Cross which had scandalized them, Light! His divinity, until then doubted, Light!

V. O my Jesus, Light of the world and my Light, I would follow Thee; by the radiance of Thy glorious Humanity, I would pass to the apprehension of the light of eternity, of the invisible Light, in which the Father dwelleth, the Light which is Thyself, O Christ. Jesus, I believe in Thee, I am a child of Thy Light; in Thy Light I shall behold Thee. Jesus, may I shine with Thy light, even as Thou dost illumine my soul, and as Thou proceedest from the Father, very Light of very Light!

VI. When Jesus was born, the night was illuminated with a marvellous light, of the

brightness of God, and a multitude of the heavenly host proclaimed His praises. His star arose for the guidance of the Kings, and they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. "Mine eyes," said Simeon, "have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: A light to the revelation of the gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (*S. Luke ii.*). When Jesus died upon the Cross, the day was obscured by a miraculous night, the sun was darkened, and men were sore afraid, saying: "Indeed, this was the Son of God!" O Jesus, conquer me by Thy light, and hide not Thyself from me.

VII. The good Master never refuses light to them who seek it. "His disciples came and said to him: Why speakest thou to them in parables? He answered and said to them: Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: but to them it is not given. For he that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall abound: but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away that also which he hath. Therefore do I speak to them in parables: because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. . . . But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear" (*S. Matth. xiii.*).

III JESUS THE LIFE

I. IN Him we live, and move, and are. He lives in us in silence and mystery, in a fidelity that never fails. Without His continued creative action, we should immediately again fall into the nothingness from which we came, and die. Without life we are nothing. What is nothing? It is negation, it is impotence, it is misery, it is a void, it is a black hopelessness. Apart from Jesus, the Life, we are all this. It is by His force alone that we are able to make the least physical movement—He by whose power our intelligence operates, He who gives more and more abundant vitality to the soul who corresponds to Him in faith and love.

II. Jesus said: “Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. He that believeth in the Son, hath life everlasting: but he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. The words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life” (*S. John* iii., vi.).

III. Jesus said: “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, although he

be dead, shall live: And everyone that liveth and believeth in me, shall not die for ever" (S. John xi.).

O Love, who can ever separate me from Thee, for Thou art the life of men; without Thee is nothing; and if we should be wholly separated from Thee for one instant we should fall again into that nothingness from which Thy creative love has drawn us. For Thou, Jesus, givest us life, and Thy life is our light. Jesus, make us to understand this light that shines in our darkness, so that we be not wholly in darkness, comprehending Thee not.

IV. "I am the true vine: and my Father is the husbandman. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing. In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; as I also have kept my Father's commandments, and do abide in his love" (S. John xv.).

V. "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. Now this is eternal life: That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. . . . I have manifested thy name to the

men whom thou hast given me out of the world. Thine they were, and to me thou gavest them: and they have kept thy word. . . . I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me: because they are thine: And all my things are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them" (*S. John xvii.*).

VI. This is eternal life: to know Jesus, who is the Life. As our bodies need continual nourishment, continual repose, continual care for their maintenance; so our souls need continually to draw their strength and support from Jesus, to continually abide in Him, to continually have recourse to Him, every moment of their existence. As a man clings to his life, preferring it, even accompanied with sickness and sorrow, to death; so must we cling, Jesus, to Thee, in all circumstances, in all tribulations, and never let Thee depart from us, for in Thee alone is our true life.

VII. "I am alpha and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are they that wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb: that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. . . . I Jesus have sent my Angel, to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and stock of David, and the bright and morning star. And the spirit and the bride say: Come. And he that heareth, let him say: Come. And he that thirsteth, let him come: and he that will, let him take the water of life, gratis. . . . Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" (*Apoc. xxii.*).

IV

JESUS THE WAY

I. JESUS said: "No man cometh to the Father,
but by me" (*S. John* xiv.). No man
knoweth the Father but by me. How,
then, can we know the Christ, the Way? By
considering Him, not in the likeness of an image
or statue we have seen, but as the living reality,
the historical fact, the Word made Flesh, who
dwelt among us, "Which we have heard, which
we have seen with our eyes, which we have
looked upon and our hands have handled"
(*i S. John* i. 1). Consider His spoken words;
read, listen to, and absorb them. Wait upon
them. With S. Paul, consider Him as crucified,
yet as risen and living. The same Jesus, yester-
day, to-day, and for ever. Consider Him in His
eucharist, our daily bread. In our midst,
actually, substantially. This is the Way: Jesus.

II. S. Paul tells us that Jesus is the Mediator
between us and God. A mediator is a means
by which enemies may become reconciled to
one another. "By Jesus, then, O my God,
Thou comest down to me, and I rise to Thee;
by Him Thou dost become Man, and by Him I
become one with the Father; by Him, my God
recovers, embraces, and possesses me; by Him,
I recover, embrace, and possess my God. O
Jesus, to know Thou art God, to believe in Thee,
and to be able in thinking of Thee to say always:
By Him! For Jesus! This is enough to be

at once strong, pure, patient, fearless, courageous; it is to possess all riches, for it is to love Thee and the Father who has sent Thee" (*Mgr. Gay*).

III. How can we approach the Father? By union with the Christ. He teaches us of God as the "Father" (Father is the name of power and of active benevolence; the name of almighty love and of active love). Jesus is perfect God, one with the Father in heaven; and perfect Man, one with our humanity. By His spoken word He teaches us how we may be agreeable in God's sight. He teaches us to pray, and how to pray: "Our Father who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name." S. Thomas Aquinas says Prayer, in its broad sense, is an elevation of the soul to God; and in its strict sense, it is a demand made of God. But it is always direct communication with God, through Jesus Christ. Hence prayer is: to give to God, and to ask of God.

IV. "Prayer was not given to us as a pastime, nor as a luxury or amusement; it is simply the natural position of the creature at the feet of the Creator" (*Faber*). "Raising our eyes towards the Eternal, the Infinite, we dare to say: Father! and thereby we make mention of our divine origin. *Our Father*, in allusion to the great family of the Church, militant, suffering, and triumphant, of which we are members: *Who art in heaven*. We have a home, and one in conformity with our nobility: a palace, a kingdom! . . . Heaven! *Sicut in cœlo et in terra!* Upon earth as in heaven, my first care and joy is to see my Father glorified. Here, as

there, I have immense ambitions, I need a kingdom, or rather the King of kings must reign in my heart, and I by His grace enjoy the ineffable intimacy of His adorable Majesty" (*Review of the Holy Family*).

V. "And Jesus turning, and seeing them following him, said to them: What seek you? Who said to him, Master, where dwellest thou? He said to them: Come and see. They came, and saw where he abode, and they staid with him that day" (*S. John i.*). O happy disciples! They seek Jesus, He turns and sees them. They desire to know where He dwells, He invites and takes them to His home—and they remain with Him all the day. "O day of delight, delicious day!" exclaims S. Augustine. O happy night! Who can express the ineffable sweetness of that day's communion with the Lord?

VI. "Whither I go you know, and the way you know. Thomas saith to him: Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith to him: I am the way. . . . No man cometh to the Father, but by me" (*S. John xiv.*). And Peter said: "Lord, bid me come to thee upon the waters. And he said: Come. And Peter walked upon the waters to come to Jesus. But he was afraid, and began to sink, and cried out saying: Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretching forth his hand took hold of him, and said to him: O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?" (*S. Matth. xiv.*). How sweetly and patiently does the Saviour point out the way to His friends! and when their faith wavers, He upholds them with His hand. S. Thomas, who

had doubted, exclaims: "My Lord and my God!" S. Peter, who had presumed: "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee!"

VII. "When Jesus showed us a direct and certain way to go to God, He said the simple words: 'I leave the world and I go to my Father.' I came into this world, where I have all the days of My life been overwhelmed with innumerable sorrows and miseries; where I have suffered labours and fatigues without measure; where I have been condemned, crucified, and buried. Now, risen and glorious, I return triumphant to the bosom of My Father, with Him to partake of His eternity of bliss. You, My beloved, must follow in the same way, if you would be with Me and the Father in eternity. Deceive not yourselves; there is no other way. To gain heaven you must suffer, die, and be buried with Me" (*Blessed Henry Suso*).

V

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

I. "THE Lord is my Shepherd. I shall want nothing. He hath set me in a place of pasture. He hath brought me up on the water of refreshment. Though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me" (*Ps. xxii.*). "I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost: seek thy servant" (*Ps. cxix. 176*). The Lord has sought me in my wanderings; He

has loved me when I loved Him not; in spite of my ingratitude, He has pursued me with His tenderness; I am in His almighty hand; He leads me where He will. *Fiat!*

II. "The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he hath let out his own sheep, he goeth before them: and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. . . . I am the good Shepherd; and I know mine, and mine know me. As the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (*S. John x.*).

III. I love to think of the Master in this character of the Good Shepherd. S. Teresa tells us how the shepherd, by a gentle whistling, recalls the straying sheep to the flock. I love to think of souls as the foolish sheep of the Good Shepherd, Jesus; as timid, foolish, and ignorant creatures, but who know His voice, and who know Him. I love to think that if we are straying ever so little from Him, and if we listen for it, we shall hear that gentle whistling, which is the voice of conscience, recalling us to Him, who knows us and says to us: "Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom" (*S. Luke xii.*).

IV. "My sheep hear my voice; and I know them, and they follow me" (*S. John x.*). Yes,

Lord Jesus, our Master and our Good Shepherd, we know Thy voice; we know it in Thy commandments, in the sweetness of Thy secret communings with us, in the sacrament of Thy love; we know it in Thy Holy Scriptures, and in the intimate and ineffable consolations Thou impartest to us when we consider Thee in the tabernacle, or in the chamber of our heart. This is where we hear Thy voice, Good Shepherd; this is where we know Thy voice. We shall not hear it in the whirlwind or in the world, but in the pleasant pastures of interior peace.

V. "The shepherd of the sheep . . . goeth before them; and the sheep follow him. A stranger they follow not, but fly from him, because they know not the voice of strangers" (*S. John x.*). Alas, dear and beloved Jesus, our Good Shepherd, do we always fly from strangers to follow Thee? We have sometimes curiously wandered too often in pursuance of the stranger who careth not for the sheep. When we wander, seek and find us, good Jesus, and bring us back into Thy blessed fold. Yes, Thou wilt seek and find. Thou wilt carry us on Thy shoulders; Thou wilt bear us in Thy Heart; for Thou givest Thy life for us. Yes. Good Shepherd, Thou knowest us, and we know Thee.

VI. And where, Good Shepherd, art Thou leading us? The way is sometimes very rough and sorrowful; and we do not find the pleasant pasture and the waters of refreshment. But Thou knowest the way, and we want nothing if we follow Thee. For Thou, O Jesus, goest before us, Thy blessed Feet are the first to bleed, Thou sufferest for Thy sheep, and makest all

the way beautiful and easy with Thy consoling presence. These stones, Jesus, when trodden by Thy holy Feet, become sweet as green pastures to Thy loving sheep. These trials and crosses by the way are the refreshing waters to Thy little flock who love Thee.

VI. And Thy rod and Thy staff, how they comfort me! Thou wilt correct me, Lord, but with measure; Thou wilt chastise me, because Thou lovest me. Thou wilt prepare "a table before me against them that afflict me," and "my chalice which inebriateth me, how goodly it is! And thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto length of days" (*Ps. xxii.*). Yes, Blessed Lord, my Jesus, Thou art my Shepherd. Thou rulest me. Thou feedest, guidest, governest me. Good Shepherd, I abandon myself into Thy keeping.

VI

JESUS OUR BROTHER

I. "To as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (*S. John i.*). "And we know that to them that love God, all things work together unto good, to such as according to his purpose are called to be saints. For whom he foreknew, he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son: that he might be the first-

born amongst many brethren" (*Rom.* viii. 28, 29). "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. . . . As many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ. . . . You are all one in Christ" (*Gal.* iii.).

II. "If God be for us, who is against us? He that spared not even his own Son: but delivered him up for us all, how hath he not also with him, given us all things? Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword? But in all these things we overcome because of him that hath loved us. . . . I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (*Rom.* viii.).

III. "God is faithful: by whom you are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord . . . in all things you are made rich in him, so that nothing is wanting to you in any grace . . ." (*1 Cor.* i. 9, 5, 7). "You are Christ's: and Christ is God's" (*ibid.*, iii. 23). "When the fulness of the time was come God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law: that he might redeem them that were under the law; that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father" (*Gal.* iv. 4, 5, 6).

IV. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all

spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. As he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in his sight in charity. Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ unto himself; according to the purpose of his will: unto the praise of the glory of his grace, in which he hath graced us in his beloved Son" (*Eph.* i. 3, 4, 5, 6).

"Glory, adoration, and love to the mystery of the most Holy Trinity. To be in the Father to contemplate the Son; to be in the Son to contemplate the Father; to be in the Holy Spirit to love the Father and the Son; to be for all eternity drowned in an ocean of love to the Adorable Trinity: this is my destiny" (*Schorderet*).

V. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, who hath brought many childern into glory, to perfect the author of their salvation, by his passion. For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one. For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: I will declare thy name to my brethren: in the midst of the Church I will praise thee. . . . Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest before God, that he might be a propitiation for the sins of the people" (*Heb.* ii.).

VI. And art thou not ashamed, O our divine Brother, of Thy brothers and sisters who weary of their Father's house, and who, taking the goods and the riches that He showers upon

them, depart into a far country, the country of the world, and dissipate them to their own confusion and to Thine infinite sorrow? O our divine Brother, who in all things wast made like unto us, and who so intimately knowest the thoughts and languors of our poor hearts, and yet who lovest us and art not ashamed to call us Thy brethren; take us, Thy little flock, in Thy care, and bring us to the perfect love of Thy Father, and our Father.

VII. "Whosoever is born of God, committeth not sin: for his seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil. Whosoever is not just, is not of God, nor he that loveth not his brother. For this is the declaration which you have heard from the beginning, that you should love one another. My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth. Dearly beloved, let us love one another, for charity is of God. And every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is charity" (*I S. John* iii., iv.).

VII

JESUS AND LITTLE CHILDREN

I. "GOD gives Himself to the little ones, to those who forget themselves, to those who efface themselves. . . . God does not visit those who are for ever occupied with

themselves, and who take, as it were, God's place within themselves. He loves empty, pure hearts, disengaged from all things; then He comes, and brings with Him all grace" (*Chanoine Schorderet*). "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away" (*Magnificat*). "The Lord is the keeper of little ones: I was humbled, and he delivered me" (*Ps. cxiv. 6*).

II. "And they brought to him young children, that he might touch them. And the disciples rebuked them that brought them. Whom, when Jesus saw, he was much displeased, and saith to them: Suffer the little children to come to me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God. Amen, I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it. And embracing them and laying his hands upon them, he blessed them" (*S. Mark x.*).

Jesus, much displeased with those who would hinder the children from approaching Him! Jesus, tenderly embracing and blessing the little ones! What a ravishing and consoling picture!

III. O adorable Lord Jesus, how unutterably tender art Thou to Thy little children! Taking a little child, Thou didst lovingly embrace him, and then, setting him in the midst of Thy disciples, Thou didst exhort them to become as little children, in order to be able to receive Thee. Thou didst teach Thy Apostles lowliness and humility, calling them Thy children: "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches

to enter into the kingdom of God " (*S. Mark x.*). And again: " My little children, . . . a new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another " (*S. John xiii.*).

IV. My Jesus, who can resist Thy sweetness, when Thou callest us Thy little children, and exhortest us to love one another and to love Thee ? Who can resist such love and such tenderness, such humility and such sweetness ? Lord Jesus, we are Thy children whom God has given Thee. Lord Jesus, embrace Thy children, and suffer their embraces. Take us, most loving Lord, and hold us to Thy Heart, as a mother holds her child. Suffer us to come to Thee, suffer us to rest our head upon Thy bosom, as did Thy child, John. Suffer us to cling to Thy hand, when walking upon the troubrous waters of life, as did Thy child, Peter.

V. " Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God " (*S. Matth. v.*). My God, what purity dost Thou demand of us, that we may attain to Divine union and behold Thee ? To have a heart, free from every idle thought, free from desire for earthly things, free from the agitation of passion, free from all love of self and sensuality, all of which are enemies to that true purity wherein Thou, my God, who feedest among the lilies, wouldest make Thy abode. My Jesus, what purity of heart was it which caused Thee to say: How is it that you sought Me ? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business ?

VI. Dear Jesus, may we remember always that we are Thy little children, that we must be about Thy business, for pure love of Thee and in obedience to Thy most adorable will. Joseph and Mary did not understand Thy word, Lord Jesus, but Thy Mother treasured all Thy words in her heart, and meditated upon them day and night. By their purity and humility, Joseph and Mary became as the little children of their Holy Child, Who was subject to them. O Jesus, may we learn from the hidden beauties of humility, purity, obedience, and simplicity, which illuminated the home of Nazareth, to become pure in heart, and Thy little children.

VII. A little child has the most implicit belief in his parents; he places all his hope and confidence in them; he absolutely and entirely loves them. It is this abandonment of the little child, this helplessness and this faith, that Jesus demands of all who will enter the kingdom of God. "Suffer children to come to me, for of such is the kingdom of God" (*S. Luke xviii.*). Jesus, we come to Thee, despoiled of all self-esteem, all self-confidence, all self-love, impotent and indigent. We come, Lord Jesus, and we confidently await Thy kingdom.

VIII

JESUS OUR PHYSICIAN

I. JESUS, our Physician, never refused to heal any of the sick or the suffering who came to Him. "He went about all Galilee . . . healing all manner of sicknesses and every infirmity among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria, and they presented to him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and such as were possessed by devils and lunatics and those that had the palsy, and he cured them. And much people followed him" (*S. Matth. iv.*).

II. "Despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity: and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows: and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. The Lord was pleased to bruise him in infirmity" (*Isa. liii.*). By Thy bruises, by Thy wounds, we are healed of our ills, O our good Physician. By Thy bitter Passion, and Thy precious Crucifixion, we are saved, Lord Jesus!

III. He heals all our ills. Never was it known that any sick went to Him for healing and were

refused. Sometimes He heals us by sending us bitter medicines, sufferings, and tribulations in this world, for the sanctification of our soul, and the expiation of our sins here, instead of hereafter. Tribulations are the loving chastisement of Jesus, the Good Physician. "O Jesus, how tender, how good is Thy hand, even in the heaviest trials! May I be crucified, but crucified by Thee!" (*de Sonis*). Let us say with Jesus: "The Chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (*S. John xviii.*). "Jesus Christ is the true Physician of souls; a virtue went forth from Him which healed all those who approached Him. Almighty Physician, there is no incurable malady for Him" (*S. Bernard*).

IV. "O how good and sweet is thy Spirit, O Lord, in all things! and therefore thou chastisest them that err, by little and little: and admonishest them, and speakest to them, concerning the things wherein they offend: that learning their wickedness they may believe in thee, O Lord" (*Wisdom xii.*). "For the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things. . . . And who shall know thy thought, except thou give wisdom, and send thy Holy Spirit from above: and so the ways of them that are upon earth may be corrected, and men may learn the things that please thee? For by wisdom they were healed, whosoever have pleased thee, O Lord, from the beginning" (*Wisdom ix.*).

V. Jesus, Son of David, have pity upon us, and heal us of our ills. Thy gentle hand alone

can heal our wounds. Often the hand of man can do nothing but irritate. Send them away, Lord, said the Apostles of the exhausted multitude who had followed Thee into the desert. Send her away, for she crieth after Thee, they said of the poor mother whose daughter was sick. The multitude rebuked the two blind men who cried out to Thee: Son of David, have mercy on us. But we will cry out the more, Lord, our Good Physician: Jesus, Son of David, heal us and open our eyes! Give us sight, heal our lameness that we may follow Thee, open our ears, heal us of all our miseries.

VI. Sometimes our Good Physician heals us with bitter medicines. He sees our cowardice, our weakness and our reluctance in combating with our spiritual foes. He sees our half-heartedness and our blindness. Then He takes pity upon us, and sends us His salutary chastisement. He comes to our assistance with His Cross. And as He perceives our spiritual needs, to be great, He will adapt this blessed instrument of our salvation thereto. But grant, most loving Father, that the pains of our chastisements may ever increase our love and gratitude to Thee, who dost not leave our soul in hell, but bringest us by these afflictions into Thy presence.

VII. It is by many tribulations that we enter heaven. The way to heaven is the way of the Cross. But, courage! for Jesus, our Good Physician Himself, has endured and carried that Cross which He asks us to share; and He goes before us in all our sufferings. God never hurts us but for our healing and our good.

He makes us weep now that we may not have to weep for eternity. Jesus ! Good Physician, and healer of all my ills, I abandon myself into Thy most loving and tender hands. Do with me what Thou wilt, give me what Thou wilt, take from me what Thou wilt. All that Thou doest is very good. *Fiat!*

IX

JESUS OUR FRIEND

I. **L**OVE is a very present friend in trouble. We all desire to be loved and befriended. How our earthly friends abandon us in times of affliction ! But Love is the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother ! "I will not now call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth" (*S. John xv.*). "You are my friends, if you do the things that I command you. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another" (*S. John xiii.*). "Little children, love one another. Let us therefore love God, because God first loved us. . . . He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?" (*I S. John iv.*).

II. "The poor and the sinners have a place of predilection in the Heart of Jesus. Strange and ineffable fact ! Supreme misery, shameful misery, possesses the gift of attracting the Heart of Jesus and provoking it to a tenderness which would revolt the pride of the virtuous. Among

all His works of love, compassion and tenderness for the immense misery of sin holds the foremost rank. Never had such a thing been seen before; it astounded the people of His time so greatly that they were scandalized at it. Never again would such a thing be seen, unless His infinite tenderness had passed on into the hearts of His children" (*Monsabré*).

III. Ah, my Jesus, is there any other heart of a friend like Thy Sacred Heart, into which we may pour out all our hopes, our fears, our desires, our weaknesses, our miseries, and our joys? Jesus, is there any heart of a friend that will not after a while weary of us, and feel itself incapable of giving us further time and sympathy? No, no; there is always some secret recess of my friend's heart into which I cannot penetrate; always some secret depths of my own which I cannot reveal to him. But, O Jesus, my Friend, my God, my All, Thou knowest me altogether, for Thou hast created me; and Thou knowest all the secrets of my heart before I tell Thee, and still Thou lovest me, and dost never weary of me. On the contrary, Thou dost demand and desire that I should be ever with Thee, and that I should pour out my soul unto Thee.

IV. Yes, Lord Jesus, Thou art my most intimate Friend, for Thou dwellest in the interior chamber of my heart, and knowest me through and through. When I am absent, my Jesus, my Friend, Thou still remainest there. Thou art there for me alone, as if I were Thy sole creature. O Jesus, Thy union with me is such that it is a living and true image of Thine

eternal intimacy and union with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Therefore I am never alone, I can never be desolate. Ah, my Jesus, my best Friend, if I were only able to correspond to such love !

V. " Above all, prayer is a matter of friendship with God. We must be with our Lord, Jesus Christ, as with a father and a brother. Thus, without seeking studied words, we must be content with simple words, dictated by the heart " (*S. Teresa*). As a friend speaks to his friend, so we dare to speak to our Jesus. He calls us His little children, He gives us to enjoy all the liberties of the children of God, He gives us free access to Himself, and invites us to a holy familiarity with Him. He is to His beloved, and His beloved is to Him. O admirable mystery ! Jesus has chosen me to be His friend !

VI. " What can you seek for that you will not find in Jesus Christ ? Are you sick ? He is the Physician who will heal you. Are you abandoned ? He is the King who will protect you. Are you assailed by enemies ? He is strong to defend you. Are you sad ? He will be your joy. Are you in darkness ? He will be your light. Are you orphaned ? He will be your Father. He is your Spouse, your Friend, your Brother, infinitely great, infinitely good, infinitely merciful, infinitely beautiful, infinitely mighty; He is the eternal principle and the eternal preserver of all things. Why do you fear ? You will find in Jesus all that you can desire. Desire it, then, seek it, for this is the precious pearl of the Gospel " (*S. Bernard*).

VII. Jesus, Thou art my only Friend, for Thou art a jealous Friend. Thou wilt have all my heart, and the heart that truly desires Thy love must esteem itself happy to be beloved by no other heart here below. Thy grace is sufficient, Thy love is sufficient, Thy friendship is sufficient, Jesus, for me. May I, with the Magdalene, O my Friend, Jesus, sit at Thy Feet, contemplating Thy beauty, and finding there all my desire fulfilled? Jesus, may I abide for ever in Thy Sacred Heart; may my heart never be separated from Thy Heart. Within Thy Wounds hide me, suffer me not to be separated from Thee.

X

JESUS OUR MASTER

I. "THOU hast taught me, O God, from my youth: and till now I will declare Thy wonderful works. And unto old age and grey hairs, O God, forsake me not" (*Ps. lxx. 17, 18*). My blessed Lord, make me to be wholly teachable and docile, to learn all that Thou hast to teach me. Take from me all hardness of heart, heal me of my blindness, and illuminate the darkness of my ignorance. My Master, may I sit at Thy feet with the Magdalene, keeping silence before Thee. May I keep all Thy words within my heart, and meditate continually upon them. Teach me, my Master, the way in which I shall go, for I lift up my eyes to Thee.

II. "Come to me all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up

my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is sweet and my burden light" (*S. Matth.* xi. 28-30). We shall never be anything in the eyes of God but in proportion to the contempt that we feel for ourselves. To feel a great contempt for myself: this is the most sublime lesson that the Master would teach me. To think nothing of myself and much of others: in this consists the wisdom of Christianity.

III. With what ineffable sweetness and gentleness Jesus manifests Himself to us. From eternity with what suavity He abides in the Father's Bosom, with what love the Son contemplates the Father, and with what love does the Father find all His delight in the Son! And this ardent love, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Charity. . . . O how good and sweet is Thy Spirit, O Lord, in all things! In meekness and in littleness the Word of God comes among us in the form of a little Babe; with what humility and sweetness He teaches Joseph and Mary in the hidden life of Nazareth. Learn of Me, His whole life says to us, Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart. My yoke is sweet.

IV. What sweetness in His ministry! With what patience and beauty He exhorts the people who follow Him, speaking with authority, and graciously adorning His discourse with pictures and parables, in all things attracting, pleasing, charming, and persuading. He walks with the crowd that press around Him on all

sides. He teaches them from the height of a mountain, or from a little ship put out from the shore. He receives them after He has entered the house, weary, at the close of day. He visits the people, and takes part in their social life. He repels no one, discourages or refuses no one, but invites all to come to Him: Come to Me *all* you. . . .

V. And with His disciples, His own chosen friends, what sweetness, what patience! His children never hesitate to ask Him to explain His parables to them. He never wearies of their simplicity, their ignorance, their slowness to believe. Are you also without faith? Will you also go away? is all the gentle remonstrance that He makes. Let us, with S. Peter, answer: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known that thou art the Christ, the Son of God" (*S. John vi.*).

VI. And with the little children, dear Master, what sweetness, what gentleness! God embracing little children! Ravishing and enchanting picture! And what a wonderful lesson of humility and simplicity Thou didst give us by taking that little child to Thy side, and while Thou didst lovingly caress him, exhorting us to become as little children that we might enter into the kingdom of God. O our gentle Master, Thou hast taught us by Thine own example of perfect childhood to be docile and childlike in all our relations with Thee and with the world. "You call me Master and Lord: and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed

your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also" (*S. John* xiii.).

VII. And with Thine enemies, what sweetness, what gentleness, O Master! To Judas, no word of reproach, but: "Friend, whereto art thou come?" (*S. Math.* xxvi.). "Dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" (*S. Luke* xxii.). Of Thine executioners: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (*S. Luke* xxiii.). With Thy weak and erring friends: One look, full of compassion and love, at Peter! Act of Divine patience and condescension towards Thomas! O Master, what patience with Thy little children, what sweetness with Thy enemies! Thy burden indeed is light, and Thy service sweet, for Thy lessons are all of love.

XI

JESUS MOST HUMBLE

I. **H**OW our Blessed Lord loved the people! He came to the poor and to the humble in spirit. All His life He showed a tender preference for them. He chose Himself to be a poor Man, and to be born of a poor mother. "How hard," He said, "is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" (*S. Mark* x.); for He knew how hard it is for the rich in this world's goods to be truly humble in spirit. And how beloved was Jesus by the poor and humble! They flocked about

Him in crowds, conscious of His predilection for them. He kept them with Him by the sweetness of His ministry, so that they forgot the lapse of time and forgot to eat bread.

II. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom: and healing all manner of sickness and every infirmity among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria, and they presented to him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and such as were possessed by devils, and lunatics, and those that had the palsy, and he cured them. And much people followed him from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond the Jordan. And seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain, and when he was sat down, his disciples came unto him" (*S. Matth. iv. and v.*).

III. Let us picture to ourselves Jesus sitting amid His disciples on the mountain. And when He raised His eyes and saw Himself surrounded by the immense multitude, the humble crowd whom He loved, what love and sweetness would beam from His adorable Face, and with what a tender smile of welcome would He greet them ! And when He opened His lips to address them, the first words that fell upon His poor were: "Blessed are ye ! Blessed the poor in spirit, blessed the meek, blessed are they that mourn, blessed they that hunger and thirst, blessed the merciful and the pure in heart, blessed the peacemakers and they who suffer ! All the promises are theirs. All they are My little children !"

IV. Do not let us deceive ourselves. God will never enter into the heart that has not humbled itself before Him. For to invoke God, what is it but to beg of Him to come into our heart? And if we ask of God this grace, let us consider well what is in our heart. God is infinitely great, and He is a jealous God; and the heart that aspires to God must aspire to Him through self-abasement and through humility. A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit: "A contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (*Ps. 1.*). "He hath exalted the humble" (*Magnificat*).

V. O humility of Jesus Christ! For *our sakes* He became poor. It needed then a God to become man to teach us humility. Humility is a virtue essentially Christian, and Jesus Christ was the first to teach it to the world by His precept and by His example. He insisted upon it in His followers. To His rich disciple He said: "You must be born again." And to His humble disciples: "Whoever will be first among you shall be last." Again: "If I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet: you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them" (*S. John xiii.*).

VI. Yes, Lord Jesus, we know these things, since we are Thy children and Thy disciples. But do we, in imitation of Thy blessed example, do them? Do we minister to the necessities of the saints, to the needs of our brethren, serving them with humility and love, not despising the

poor, not hesitating to serve our enemies equally with our friends, after Thy example, dear Master? Jesus, we want Thy blessing, we desire to follow Thee in all things. Teach us, then, that we may learn of Thee, who art humble of Heart, and that by becoming truly humble we may find rest to our souls.

VII. O humility of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament! Jesus gives Himself to me under the appearance of a little wafer, to be my daily bread, the nourishment of my soul and body. O Sacred Heart of Jesus, what an excess of love! what an excess of humility! O masterpiece of the love of God, that God makes Himself to be my Bread of life! O wonderful Sacrament, in the silence, the secret, the mystery of which we are face to Face with the hidden God. O adorable Sacrament, I who am nothing—nothing, and less than nothing, am henceforth Thine utterly, wholly, and for ever and ever! Jesus, meek and humble of Heart, make my heart like unto Thy Heart!

XII

JESUS MOST PATIENT

I. “BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all he hath done for thee. Who forgiveth all thy iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion. . . . The Lord is compassionate and merciful: long-suffering and plenteous in

mercy. He will not always be angry: nor will he threaten for ever. For according to the height of the heaven above the earth: he hath strengthened his mercy towards them that fear him. As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust: man's days are as grass, as the flower of the field so shall he flourish. For the spirit shall pass in him, and he shall not be: and he shall know his place no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity and unto eternity upon them that fear him" (*Ps. cii.*).

II. "God is patient because He is eternal," says S. Augustine. Jesus is patient because His love is infinite. O patience of Jesus Christ ! O silence of Jesus Christ ! Silence before accusations, silence before blasphemies, before mockeries ! O patience of Jesus Christ ! patience that carried the Cross, patience that suffered and died upon the Cross ! Patience that hangs for us upon the Cross until the world's end ! O patience of Jesus in the Tabernacle ! There He waits for me, silent, alone, expectant, every moment, day after day. "Behold I stand at the door and knock !" sayest Thou, dear Master ? And how can we suffer this ? Thou standest ! Thou waitest ! Thou entreatest ! O wonderful patience of Jesus Christ !

III. "Wait on God with patience: join thyself to God, and endure, that thy life may be increased in the latter end. Take all that shall be brought upon thee: and in thy sorrow endure and in thy humiliation keep patience. For gold

and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation. Ye that fear the Lord, wait for his mercy: and go not aside from him, lest ye fall. For God is compassionate and merciful, and will forgive sins in the day of tribulation: and he is a protector to all that seek him in truth. Woe to them that have lost patience, and that have forsaken the right ways, and have gone aside into crooked ways. They that fear the Lord, keep his commandments, and will have patience even until his visitation" (*Ecclus.* ii.).

IV. Lord, Thou hast borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows: Thou wast wounded for our iniquities and bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon Thee, by Thy bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; every one hath turned aside into his own way: and the Lord hath laid on Thee the iniquity of us all" (*Isa.* liii.). And can I ever complain, shall I ever complain of the weight of my afflictions, Jesus, most patient King? No, no; my blessed Lord, never shalt Thou have to reproach me with refusing to help Thee bear Thy Cross. Give me, O Jesus, a portion of Thy Cross to bear.

V. Our Good Shepherd has carried our burdens for us, and, by the mouth of His Apostle, He says to us: "Bear ye one another's burdens: and so you shall fulfil my law!" (*Gal.* vi.). Give us patience, Lord, one with another; give us an infinite patience, the patience that comes only from infinite charity. Help us to do to others as we would that they should do to us, and to remember that we also need to receive

an infinite patience from our neighbour. S. Paul was ready to suffer and to die for his brethren. He loved them as his own soul: "I most gladly will spend and be spent myself for your souls" (*2 Cor. xii.*).

VI. "I therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called. With all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity. . . . Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God: whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and anger, and indignation and clamour, and blasphemy be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, even as God hath forgiven you in Christ. Be ye therefore followers of God as most dear children" (*Eph. iv.*). "Lord, how often," asked S. Peter, "shall I forgive my brother when he sin against me, until seven times?" And the God of longanimity replied: "Until seventy times seven" (*S. Matth. xviii.*).

VII. "My brethren, count it all joy when you shall fall into divers temptations: knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience. And patience hath a perfect work: that you may be perfect and entire: failing in nothing" (*S. James i. 2-4*). Give us patience, Blessed Lord, patience that endureth to the end; patience with ourselves and our own infirmities, with the circumstances of our life and with our adversities; patience with one another, beholding in all our brethren Thy beloved children for whom Thou hast endured and died, and whom Thou now awaitest. Give us patience, Jesus,

to seek Thee till we find Thee, and having found Thee to keep Thee—to refuse to let Thee go until Thou bless us—that at length we may be perfect and entire, failing in nothing.

XIII

JESUS CRUCIFIED

I. **W**HILE we were yet sinners, Love died for us. Behold Him immolated upon the Altar of the Cross: His arms open wide to embrace us, His feet nailed to await us; His head bowed down to give us the kiss of peace; His Heart wounded with love of us; His whole Body laid out to redeem us; Behold and see if there be any love like unto this love. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (*S. John xv.*).

II. “With Christ I am nailed to the cross. And I live, now not I: but Christ liveth in me. And that I live now in the flesh: I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered himself for me” (*Gal. ii. 19, 20*). “Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness” (*Eph. v. 2*). The Cross without Jesus—what an insupportable affliction! The Cross with Jesus—what an inestimable treasure!

III. A skilful artificer always employs the most suitable instruments in his work. For

the sanctification of souls, God employs the instrument of the Cross. Infinitely various are His ways of applying it to individual souls, but none have ever achieved the journey of life without experiencing it. Nothing else can replace the Cross, nor accomplish its work. There where the Cross remains a long while, and is received with love and goodwill, it purifies, strengthens, and ennobles. The souls who are unsubmissive to its weight never attain the distinction, the spiritual intelligence, the depth or maturity arrived at by those who suffer gladly for Christ. It is the Cross that works the perfection of human nature. For with the Cross is the assurance that does not accompany pleasures, that God is present. By love, the Cross becomes the Crucifix !

IV. By an incomprehensible prodigy of love for us, and seeing that we were lost by our sin, the Son of God undertook to save us. He endured unutterable humiliations and sufferings, the most frightful torments, and the awful agony of His Passion and Crucifixion. And if it had been necessary thus to die a thousand times, or remain upon the Cross until the end of the world, He would have willingly done so for the salvation of men, or even for the salvation of a single soul. Jesus Christ loves me because His Father loves me; and in obedience to His Father He dies for me. God the Father pardons my sins by the merits and obedience of His Son.

V. "The Son contemplating the heart of the Father, loves me in accomplishment of His will. The Father contemplating the wounds and the

obedience of His Son, is reconciled with us sinners, and unites us to Himself by love. Hence, if we would find healing and consolation in our sufferings, let us hasten to embrace our adorable Saviour crucified for love of us; let us take refuge in the shadow of His wings, and fix our eyes upon Him, nailed to the Cross; let us ever remember the merits of the obedience of this Son, in whom the Father finds the object of His eternal delights. Since, when we were yet sinners, God gave us this Son, shall He not with Him also give us all things?" (*S. Augustine*).

VI. " My Jesus, how sweet art Thou as Thou inclinest Thine Head towards me from the Cross ! I hear Thy voice say to me: ' Come, My beloved ; since thou hast so ardent a desire to behold and adore My Face. Come, I am ready for thy kiss of love; I bend My Face towards thee.' But, O my God, replies my soul, it is not this Countenance, wan and sorrowful, pale and without beauty, of which the radiance is all extinguished by Thy Blood and Thine agony, that I have desired to behold, but rather that glorious Countenance in which the angels perpetually find their delight. And Jesus replies: ' Do not deceive yourselves; they who have not first loved and embraced the sorrowful Countenance of the Crucified, shall never behold My glorious Face in heaven.' O my God, grant that I may comprehend this reply, and that I may love Thy Cross, in order to pass on to Thy glory " (*S. Anselm*).

VII. With Thy Head inclined upon the Cross, my Jesus, Thou didst consider the crowd that

gazed upon Thee. There were Thine executioners who mocked Thee, the Pharisees who insulted Thee; the mass of the indifferent who passed by Thee or lingered only from curiosity. There also was Thy loving disciple, John, remaining faithfully beside Thee, Thy friend, the Magdalene, who never ceased to adore Thee. There was Thy Mother, standing in the strength of the Immaculate beside Thee, sharing in Thy Passion. To-day again, my Jesus, Thou beholdest all of us from the Calvary, where Thou art daily immolated in the sacrifice of the Mass; Thou beholdest the secrets of the hearts of all, of Thine enemies, of those who pass Thee by, and of Thy faithful lovers. O Jesus, Love Crucified, may we feel this Thy gaze ever resting upon us from the Cross.

XIV

JESUS RISEN

I. **L**OVE rises from the dead, vanquisher of death. They who truly love can never die, for Love is Life. "God who is rich in mercy, for his exceeding charity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ (by whose grace you are saved), and hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in the heavenly places through Christ Jesus" (*Eph.* ii.). Let us, then, endeavour to rise with Jesus Christ, we who need to be together with Him in all the ways of our life. Let us enkindle our

soul by faith and charity. Let us rise above the miseries of earth, and permit nothing earthly to hold us captive or hinder our flight.

II. "My Father worketh until now; and I work. Amen, amen, I say unto you, the Son cannot do anything of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing; for what things soever he doeth, these the Son also doth in his manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things which himself doth, and greater works than these will he show him, that you may wonder. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and giveth life: so the Son also giveth life to whom he will" (*S. John v. 17, etc.*).

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Oh, how I love this cry! It contains everything; all the most perfect prayers and all the highest virtues. With the Master there are no conditions, no limits. I am ready to do all or nothing, to suffer without consolation, or to enjoy sweetest consolations: speak; what wilt Thou have me to do? My heart is ready, O Jesus Christ, my heart is ready" (*Fénelon*).

III. "I set the Lord always in my sight: for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved. Therefore my heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced: moreover, my flesh also shall rest in hope. Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance: at thy right hand are delights even to the end" (*Ps. xv.*).

We greet Thee, O Christ, the Conqueror, our light, our strength, our hope! We adore Thee,

King of the ages, who bringest down the proud and raisest the faithful who believe and hope in Thee.

IV. "All that the Father giveth to me; and him that cometh to me, I will not cast out: because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. Now this is the will of the Father who sent me; that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again in the last day. And this is the will of my Father that sent me; that everyone who seeth the Son, and believeth in him, may have life everlasting, and I will raise him up at the last day" (*S. John vi. 37-40*).

V. "We must love the Cross, because Jesus Christ was nailed to it. . . . Jesus was crucified, we will also be crucified; Jesus was humiliated, we also will be humiliated; Jesus was poor, we also will be poor; Jesus suffered, we will suffer; Jesus died upon the Cross for love of us, we will die to all things for love of Him. We will follow Him to Calvary, not shrinking from any sacrifice. To suffer all that God pleases to send us and for love of Jesus Christ is the greatest happiness. Jesus Christ was crucified to give to the world salvation, life, and resurrection; the more we suffer, the more shall we participate in these heavenly gifts" (*Schorderet*).

VI. "But Mary stood at the sepulchre without, weeping. Now as she was weeping, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre: and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the foot, where the body

of Jesus had been laid. They said to her: Woman, why weepest thou ? She saith to them: Because they have taken away my Lord: and I know not where they have laid him. When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing; and she knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith to her: Woman, why weepest thou ? whom seekest thou ? She thinking that it was the gardener, saith to him: Sir, if thou hast taken him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him: and I will take him away. Jesus saith to her: Mary: She turning, saith to him: Rabboni (which is to say, Master) " (*S. John xx.*).

VII. " Mary ! What an accent of love, of reproach, of revelation in that word. It is sweet even here below to hear our name familiarly uttered by the mouth of a friend. But when it is God Himself who speaks to us by name, a God who has died and risen again for us, and who calls us, what echo does not this awaken in the depths of our misery ! Upon hearing her name, Mary understood all things: the mystery of the Resurrection and the love of her Saviour; and in this love she recognized Him. Rabboni ! One word sufficed her, as one word had sufficed Jesus. The more souls love, the briefer is their language " (*Lacordaire*).

XV

JESUS ASCENDED

I. JESUS ! This is the day of Thy glory, the day of Thy magnificent entry into Thy kingdom. Thou art the King of Glory. Thou art my King and my Father and my Love. O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Thy name in all the earth; because Thy magnificence is exalted above the heavens. How good, how pleasant it is, O my Jesus, to admire Thine incomparable beauty and the sweetness of Thy majesty; how good, how pleasant to follow Thee with our eyes, to accompany Thee with our hearts, to hold Thee within our souls; till the earth clouds, O King of Glory, hide Thee from us for a little while, the while we adore Thee in the obscurity of Faith !

II. " Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you, that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go and prepare a place for you: I will come again, and will take you to myself, that where I am, you also may be. And whither I go, you know, and the way you know. . . . I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you. Yet a little while: and the world seeth me no more. But you see me, because I live, and you shall live " (*S. John xiv.*).

III. " Ye have heard that I said to you: I go away and come unto you. If you loved me,

you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father : for the Father is greater than I. But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart. But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you: but if I go, I will send him to you. . . . A little while, and now you shall not see me: and again a little while, and you shall see me: because I go to the Father : " (S. John xvi.).

IV. " Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while, and you shall not see me: and again a little while and you shall see me ? Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. You now indeed have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and I go to the Father. . . . And now glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with thee. . . . And now I am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name, whom thou hast given me: that they may be one, as we also are " (S. John xvii.).

V. Lord, stay with us, because it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And He went in with them. O Jesus, if we constrain Thee to remain with us, Thou canst not refuse us, but Thou comest in and abidest with us, with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Lord, it

is towards evening; the darkness of death approaches us; abide with us and dispel our shadows with Thy radiant light. Lord, reveal Thyself to us in the breaking of bread, remain with us in Thy sacramental presence, remain with us as our daily food, remain with us as the Way which leads to holiness, to salvation, to heaven, to the Face of God.

VI. Lord Jesus, how beautiful is this land of our exile from Thee, since Thou hast blessed it with Thine Incarnate presence! What joy for us in our banishment, to dwell upon the earth trodden by Thine adorable Feet, to behold those flowers of the field which Thou didst employ for our instruction; to follow Thee here in Thy humiliations and Thy sufferings, with the hope to arrive, ever in company with Thee, at Thy glorious resurrection and ascension! Jesus! I would not ascend with Thee into Thy glory before I had first lived and suffered and died with Thee in this most sweet vale of tears, Thine earth.

VII. How incomparable is Thy beauty, O King of Glory! Thou art beautiful in the Bosom of the Father as the Eternal Word of God; Thou art beautiful in Thy birth of a pure Virgin; beautiful art Thou in Thy perfect God-head and perfect Manhood; beautiful in Thy miracles; beautiful in Thy teaching; beautiful in all Thy earthly life; beautiful in Thy sufferings. How beautiful, O King of Glory, upon the Cross, and in Thy victory over death; how beautiful in Thy descent into limbo, and in Thy glorious resurrection; how beautiful in Thy wonderful ascension! Always Thou art

worthy of admiration. O Jesus Christ, O Jesus Christ ! What words are there wherewith to express our admiration ! Our hearts faint, O Jesus, for love of Thee, for desire of Thee, for admiration of Thee. Jesus, a cloud has received Thee out of our sight; but Thou wilt come again. O Jesus Christ, we watch for Thee.

XVI

JESUS OUR KING

I. **B**LESSED be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Jesus, our King, who comes to us meek and lowly and riding upon a humble ass, may we never cease to give Thee praise and honour. O our King, may we never forget to praise God for all the mighty works we have seen ! All Thy works praise Thee, Jesus, King of heaven and earth. If Thy disciples should cease to praise Thee, Thou hast declared that the very stones would cry out. Help us always to remember that Thou art the King of Glory, even in Thy humility, and even upon the Cross !

II. The children of Israel demanded of Samuel to make them a king to judge them. "There shall be a king over us," they said; "our king shall judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles for us" (*I Kings viii.*). And God heard them and gave them a king. "Now therefore, your king is here, whom you have chosen and desired: Behold the Lord hath given you a king." Jesus is the King whom God has given to us. He will go before us and fight

our battles for us. And He promises: If we "depart not from following the Lord, but serve Him with all our heart, He will not forsake His people for His great name's sake" (*I Kings xii.*).

III. Jesus, our King, and our Brother, who goes before us to fight our battles, "Thou hast made us to our God also kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth" (*Apoc. v. 8*). Where our King is, there we are to be also, for He is gone to prepare a place for us in His Kingdom. O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God, happy are they who dwell in Thy house! They shall praise Thee for the ages of ages. "His eyes shall see the King in His beauty, they shall see the land far off. Thy eyes shall see Jerusalem, a rich habitation, a tabernacle that cannot be removed . . . there our Lord is magnificent . . . for the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our King: He will save us" (*Isa. xxxiii.*).

IV. When a king leads his people to battle, they fight with him, obeying his every command. S. Paul tells us how to fight: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life whereunto thou art called. . . . I charge thee before God, who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ . . . that thou keep the commandments without spot, blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . Who is the blessed and only mighty, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, who inhabiteth light inaccessible whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honour and empire everlasting. Amen" (*I Tim. vi.*).

V. King of Glory, our Jesus is also King of Calvary. "Behold your King," said Pilate to the Jews, who would crucify Him. Behold your King, crowned with thorns, disfigured beyond recognition, by the cruel torments to which the sins of His people have subjected Him. Yes, my Jesus, I behold Thee, King of Sorrows, King of the Cross, and in this way of the Cross also, Thou sayest to us, who desire Thee for our King: Follow Me, I go before thee to fight thy battles; follow by the way of suffering, by the way of the Cross. Follow Me, I go to prepare a place for you.

VI. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof: the world and all they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and hath prepared it upon the rivers. Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates; and the King of glory shall enter in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord who is strong and mighty: the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of Glory shall enter in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory" (Ps. xxiii.).

VII. Reign, O Jesus Christ, reign, my King, in my heart. Admit of no other rule but Thine own. Reign over me in every moment of my life, in every circumstance of my existence. Ordain for me whatever Thou wilt, my King, I will follow Thee, I will obey Thee, I will serve Thee—in all labours, in all strivings, in all sorrows and desolations, in all afflictions and sickness, in all happiness and prosperity, in all

repose and peace. I will follow Thee with confidence, I will follow Thee with love, with abandonment, with ardent hope, with infinite desire. Reign for ever, Jesus, my King; live for ever in my heart.

XVII

JESUS OUR HOPE

I. "ALTHOUGH my unworthiness is immense, although my sins are without number, yet I can never despair of the mercy of Jesus Christ, whilst I behold Him on the Cross; whilst I behold Him pouring the profusion of His grace upon the good thief. I, too, may dare to hope in the same goodness. He who despairs of the remission of his sins denies the mercy of God" (*S. Augustine*). The sin of Judas which found no forgiveness was not the betrayal of his Master, but it was his despair of the mercy of God. It was his confidence in the goodness of the Saviour that inspired the generous repentance of S. Peter. There is no unpardonable offence against God, but despair of His infinite mercy.

II. "To despair of God's mercy is to deny the love He has shown us in our predestination and our adoption; it is to destroy the truth of His promises; it is to blaspheme against the power of His redemption. The compassion which I perceive in Jesus Christ, in whom I hope, is too great for me to dare to place a limit to it. Since He has promised us eternal life, and since

He has the power to give it to us, however miserable we be, we must await with confidence those promises, which being God's promises are inviolable" (*S. Augustine*).

III. "Firmly to expect the vision and the possession of God, and, in order to arrive at this, to expect the grace of God; to expect because God has promised and because He is faithful to His promises; to expect without ever being discouraged, in spite of the length of our earthly exile, in spite of the burden of our human nature, prey to all kinds of infirmities and tribulations, in spite of the terrible rebellion of the passions, in spite of the tenacity of our faults and imperfections; to expect without ever despairing of the Divine mercy, despite the number, the shame and the depth of our falls, the enormity of our ingratitude; to expect, to await, with a firm and unshaken confidence . . . this is Christian Hope.

IV. "To expect without *presumptuously* believing in our own strength, without *speculating upon the goodness* of God, thereby hardening ourselves in sin, *without counting upon a final moment* to return to God, after long years of forgetfulness; in fine, to expect, *whilst asking for His grace, and co-operating with His grace*—this is Christian Hope" (*Monsabré*).

Let us very quietly rest in the perfect assurance that Jesus, our Hope, will never fail us in all the dangers and tribulations that may menace us in this journey of our life.

V. "To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. In thee, O my God, I put my trust: let

me not be ashamed. Shew, O Lord, thy ways to me, and teach me thy paths. Direct me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art God, my Saviour; and on thee have I waited all the day long. Remember, O Lord, thy bowels of compassion; and thy mercies that are from the beginning of the world. The sins of my youth and my ignorances do not remember. The Lord is sweet and righteous: therefore he will give a law to sinners in the way. He will guide the mild in judgment: he will teach the meek his ways. The Lord is a firmament to them that fear him: and his covenant shall be made manifest to them. My eyes are ever towards the Lord: for he shall pluck my feet out of the snare . . ." (*Ps. xxiv.*).

VI. "In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded: deliver me in thy patience. Bow down thy ear to me: make haste to deliver me. Be thou unto me a God, a Protector, and a house of refuge to save me. For thou art my strength and my refuge: and for thy name's sake thou wilt lead me and nourish me. . . . O how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that hope in thee, in the sight of the sons of men. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy face, from the disturbance of men" (*Ps. xxx.*).

VII. "We are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope. For what a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not; we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity.

For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what the Spirit desireth: because he asketh for the saints according to God " (*Rom.* viii.).

XVIII

JESUS SENDS THE COMFORTER

I. "O HOLY SPIRIT, inestimable gift of the Heart of Jesus, O Illuminator, O Comforter, O invincible Warrior, deign to descend into our hearts! Illumine, console, combat, in order that we, feeble branches of that Tree of Life which is Christ, and of which Thou art the sap, that we also may love God with all our heart and know how to mistrust our own strength. O Spirit of strength, when Thou art present, nothing can resist Thee! How didst Thou transform the Apostles! how didst Thou strengthen the Martyrs! How didst Thou confirm and fortify the Pontiffs and Confessors, and inspire all the servants of God with the most holy charity!" (*P. Mortier, O.P.*).

II. " And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. And in this we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us " (*1 S. John* iii. 24). In this we know that we abide in him, and he in us; because he hath given us of His Spirit. O Holy Spirit of Charity, by Thee we know the

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Father; by Thee we know the Son; by Thee we are one with the Father and the Son, by the love wherewith Thou fillest us, O Spirit of Love, who art Thyself all our love, all our life, our God, our light, our all, our eternal and everlasting hope. O Holy Spirit, move over these dark and troubled waters of our soul; let the light be created therein. Spirit of Love, the light is good. Enlighten our darkness.

III. "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever. The Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, nor knoweth him: but you shall know him, because he shall abide with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more. But you see me because I live, and you shall live. . . . The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I have said to you" (*S. John* xiv.).

IV. Our Blessed Lord says: "Another" Paraclete. He says again: "I will come to you." And thereby do we know, Lord, that Thou and the Holy Spirit art one God, as Thou and the Father art one. And this is the mystery of the Trinity. "If any man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him" (*S. John* xiv.). And thereby do we know indeed that Thou wilt not leave us orphans, our tender Father, our elder Brother, our Comforter, Jesus. And these are the things which the world cannot

receive, because the world seeth them not; only Thine own, Blessed Lord, can see Thee, and we see Thee, because of Thy Spirit of truth which the Father has sent in Thy Name.

V. The world sees Thee not. The world knows Thee not. The world loves darkness rather than light. The world has no part in Thee. O unhappy world! O blind, ignorant, and senseless world! O Spirit of Truth, penetrate and pierce this abyss of misery, illumine this dense ignorance, compel us all to love Thee. O Consuming Fire of Love, consume and utterly destroy our hardness of heart, and enkindle within us the fire of Thy charity. Take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us. Bring His words to our remembrance; show us plainly of the Father.

VI. "Jesus answered: Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. . . . The Spirit breatheth where He will; and thou hearest his voice, but thou knowest not whence he cometh or whither he goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (*S. John* iii.). Come, Holy Ghost, inspire our souls! Spirit of Christ, sanctify me! Come like a mighty wind from heaven; fill the whole house, the inmost depths of the hearts of Thy faithful; consume them with the fire of Thy love!

VII. Spirit of Light, create light within my darkness. Say to me: "Arise, be enlightened,

for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and a mist the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. . . . Lift up thy eyes round about and see: . . . Then shalt thou see and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged. . . . Thou shalt no more have the sun for thy light by day, neither shall the brightness of the moon enlighten thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee for an everlasting light, and thy God for thy glory " (*Isa. Ix.*).

XIX

JESUS GIVES US HIS MOTHER

I. JESUS gives us the most precious gifts. He gives us all that He has, wherefore is it that He gives us His Mother to be our mother. It was not sufficient for Him to immolate His Body as a victim for our sins upon the Cross; it was not sufficient for Him to give us His Body and Blood to be our daily Bread in the Blessed Sacrament. But from the Cross He considers all His children for whom He is dying, at His feet, and " When Jesus therefore had seen His mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that he said to the disciple: Behold thy mother."

II. " And from that hour the disciple took her to his own " (*S. John xix.*). Oh, happy

disciple, the beloved of the Master, and now to receive from Him this precious care. From that hour S. John could call Mary, Mother! And from that hour Mary, by a mystery of wonderful love, adopted into her immaculate heart the entire human race, the enemies as well as the friends of her Jesus. She became their mother, to love them henceforth with the solicitude and the fondness of a mother. Next to the Divine Heart of Jesus, Mary's immaculate heart loves us, understands and knows us, for in all things her will is one with that of Jesus.

III. Mary gives us Jesus. All graces come to us from Mary. There was a moment when the salvation of the world depended upon the consent of the Virgin to become the Mother of God: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word" (*S. Luke i.*). "And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" (*S. Luke ii.*).

Mary, Mother of Jesus, always with Jesus, ever ministering to His needs, ever serving Him, ever loving Him, ever submissive to Him, her will always perfectly united to His! And this Mother, Lord Jesus, Thou hast given to us, to be our Mother!

IV. So perfectly was Mary's will united to God's will, that she perfectly consented to His will in all things. She consented to the Incarnation, she consented to the sorrowful flight into Egypt, she consented to the hidden life of poverty and labour of her Divine Son, she consented to the mystery of His ministry with its

hardships, she consented to His dolorous Passion, to His precious death and burial, and to the adoption as her children of His executioners ! Oh, what abnegation in the heart of Mary ! She did not abandon herself in her sorrows, but she shared His Passion with her Son. *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*. The Mother of Sorrows stood by the Cross ! Mary was always strong, because her will was one with God's will.

V. "Mary, Mother of God, Mother of Sorrows ! Protectress of man, victorious foe of Satan ! Mother of mercy, Mirror of Justice ! Lily of purity, Ocean of wisdom ! The Virgin of the Crib, the Mother of Calvary, the Queen of the Cenacle ! Mary, who in verity lived among us in the body, that pure body which death was powerless to destroy, that holy body whose touch filled the cavity of the tomb with blossoms; so perfectly impressed with the Divine beauty, that God would not leave thee the earth . . ." (*Louis Venillot*). Thou reignest now clothed in that radiant body as Queen of heaven and Queen of the seraphim ! Thou art our Mother, O Queen, and thou acceptest us for thy children !

VI. Mary, Mother of Jesus, Mary, my Mother, thou wast always with Jesus, with thee is the plenitude of grace. Thou wilt always give us Jesus; thou canst give us nothing else. Thou hast nothing to give us, O Mother, but Jesus, and Jesus thou wilt give us in all the fulness of His beauty. O Mary, "our life, our sweetness and our hope, to thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee do we send up

our sighs, mourning, and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn, then, O most gracious Advocate, thy merciful eyes towards us. And after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!"

VII. Can it be imagined, asks S. Teresa, that so great a King as our Lord Jesus Christ, should ever be unattended by His courtiers, His angels, and the host of the Blessed? Is He not one with His own, as He is one with the Father? Is it not, then, to be believed that the Saints, who abide in the Heart of Jesus, where we also abide, hear us when we invoke them?

Lord Jesus, give us grace to believe that the holy multitude of the Saints, more glorious than the suns and stars of heaven, cluster like rays of light around Thy throne, O our Father, around Thy heart, O Jesus, and that there where Thou art, even within our hearts, they also are there with Thee. Mary, Mother of God, pray for us. O, all ye saints and angels of heaven, pray for us!

XX

JESUS IN PENANCE

I. "FOR day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: I am turned in my anguish, whilst the thorn is fastened. I have acknowledged my sin to thee, and my injustice

I have not concealed. I said I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord: and thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin. For this shall every one that is holy pray to thee in a seasonable time. Thou art my refuge from the trouble which hath encompassed me; my joy, deliver me from them that surround me. I will give thee understanding, and I will instruct thee in the way in which thou shalt go: I will fix my eyes upon thee" (*Ps. xxxi.*).

II. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart: and he will save the humble of spirit" (*Ps. xxxiii.*). "Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. To my hearing thou shalt give joy and gladness; and the bones that have been humbled shall rejoice. Turn away thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create a clean heart in me, O God: and renew a right spirit within my bowels. Cast me not away from thy face; and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and strengthen me with a perfect spirit" (*Ps. l.*).

III. Jesus came not to destroy, but to fulfil. His teaching was to proclaim the beauty of holiness and to give us an example that we should follow in His steps. Sinners were drawn to His feet, by the love with which He inspired them. They left all to follow Him. For sin is a void, where love is absent, where light is absent. If the sinner beholds Jesus indeed, He who is Love, He who is Light, sin must

become impossible and hideous. When Peter sinned, a look from Jesus drove the sin from his heart which loved the Master. With the good thief, a regard of faith, and he was converted from a sinner into a saint. Where Jesus truly is, the negation of Jesus cannot be.

IV. Sin may often proceed from ignorance: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (*S. Luke xxiii. 34*). "You will not come to me that you may have life" (*S. John v.*). Sin is death. . . . "When you were dead in your sins" (*Col. ii.*). Sin is night. Judas went out, "and it was night" (*S. John xiii.*). Sin is a profound sorrow to the Heart of Jesus. When our Blessed Lord was sorrowful it was invariably when considering the sins of those who would not come to Him for life; "Jesus was troubled in spirit, and he testified, and said: Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you shall betray me."

V. When the woman taken in adultery was brought before Jesus, He did not condemn her; but He confounded her accusers and sent her away in peace, with the injunction to sin no more. He did not condemn her ignorance, but showed her His gentleness and mercy; for He came to find the lost sheep of the House of Israel. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. "And Jesus spoke again to them, saying: I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (*S. John viii.*). Jesus does not condemn the sinner, but He shows him the beauty of holiness—the way whereby he may forsake his sin.

VI. And Mary Magdalene, the great sinner, the incomparable penitent, to whom so much was forgiven, because of the depth of her love, she who could give to her Saviour nothing but the silence of her inexpressible repentance, the perpetuity of her adoring contemplation, the anointing of her rich perfumes—she gave Him all her soul. She was the “ friend ” of Jesus. Was ever so wonderful a friendship as this ? From the midst of her misery and her shame a woman raises her eyes to the unutterable beauty of Purity itself. She is smitten with the love of God. She is slain thereby to herself ; and from the ashes of her past life her soul arises pure and beautiful, never resting till she has entered into the Heart of the Holy of Holies. Many sins were forgiven her, because she loved much.

VII. I love to think of the silence of this friendship of the Magdalene with the Christ. Without a word she entered the house of Simon, in silence she wept upon the Master’s feet, then anointed them with the precious perfume and wiped them with her hair ; silently she remained there, *never ceasing* to kiss His feet. And He said : “ Let her alone, why do you trouble her ” (*S. John xii.*). “ She hath done what she could ” (*S. Matth. xxvi.*). When she sat at His feet at her own home in Bethany she did not speak. She loved Him, she listened to His teaching, she contemplated His ineffable beauty. As if in respect for her love of silence, when Martha tells her that the Master has sent for her, it is in a whisper that she says : “ The Master is come and calleth for thee.” It is always silence—silence and love, silence and repentance.

XXI

JESUS IN COMMUNION

I. PRAYER of S. Bonaventura: "O most sweet Lord Jesus, pierce my soul, in all that she has most hidden and intimate, with the most suave and salutary dart of Thy love, with the dart of true and pure charity, with that most holy charity which filled the heart of Thine Apostle; in such manner that my soul ceaselessly languish and melt away with love and desire of Thee alone. That she sigh after Thee, fainting at the thought of Thy tabernacles; that she yearn for her deliverance and for her union with Thee. Grant that my soul hunger for Thee, who art the Bread of Angels, the nourishment of holy souls, our daily bread, the living bread come down from heaven containing all sweetness and all savour, with delights of greatest suavity.

II. "O Thou, whom angels aspire to contemplate without ceasing ! may my heart always hunger for Thee; and may it for ever feed upon Thee; may my soul in her most intimate depths be fulfilled with the suavity of Thy delights. May my heart ever thirst for Thee, O fountain of life, fountain of wisdom and of science, living source of eternal light, torrent of delights, abundance of the house of God !

III. " May my heart have no other ambition than to possess Thee, may it seek and find Thee, may it tend towards and attain Thee, may it

think of naught save Thee, speak but of Thee, and do all things for the honour and the glory of Thy name, with humility and discernment, with love and pleasure, with ease and affection, with perseverance which shall endure to the end. Be Thou alone ever my hope and all my confidence, my riches and my delights, my pleasure and my joy, my repose and my tranquillity, my peace and my suavity, my perfume and my sweetness, my nourishment and my refreshment, my refuge and my help, my wisdom and my portion, my good and my treasure. O Jesus, may my heart and my mind be always and for ever fixed and firmly rooted in Thee alone."

IV. "Amen, amen, I say unto you: he that believeth in me hath everlasting life. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. Amen, amen, I say unto you: except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed: He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me" (*S. John v.*).

V. Prayer of Sister Elisabeth of the Trinity:
"O my beloved Jesus Christ, crucified for love,
I would be a spouse of Thy heart; I would
cover Thee with glory, I would love Thee . . .

even to dying for Thee ! But I feel my impotence, and I beseech Thee to clothe me with Thyself, to identify my soul with all the movements of Thy soul, to submerge me, to invade me, to substitute Thyself for me, that my life may be but a beam and a ray of Thy life. Enter into me, as Adorer, as Restorer, and as Saviour."

VI. Contemplate Jesus within us. " Ah, my daughters," says S. Teresa, " since, from the moment of receiving holy communion, Jesus Christ is Himself within you, close the eyes of your body, to open those of the soul and behold Him ! He is in the midst of your heart. And if you make this a habit each time you approach the heavenly banquet, and preserve yourselves so pure as to be often allowed admittance among the guests of the Spouse, believe me, this divine Spouse will not hide, or fail to make Himself known to your soul in proportion to the desire you have to behold Him; and you may desire Him with such ardour that He shall withdraw all the veils and discover Himself entirely to you."

VII. "*In finem dilexit eos*, He has loved us to the extreme, even to the Eucharist ! Enter into my soul, O Jesus, Eucharistic, supreme sweetness, inebriate me with Thy delights; eternal light, shine upon the eyes of my soul, and enlighten her that she may comprehend how amiable Thou art, that she may know Thee, and love Thee; for, Lord, if she loves Thee not, it is because she knows Thee not; and if she know Thee not, it is because she understands not how worthy art Thou to be loved. Ah ! how true is that word that the

light shone in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not!" (*S. Augustine*). God of my heart, all is obedient to Thy voice, all is Thine. My heart which Thou hast created is Thine and no more my own. O my God, Thou also art mine, for I love Thee. Thou art all mine, O my eternal Good; do with me as it shall please Thee. *I love Thee!*

XXII

JESUS IN THE TABERNACLE

I. "O MIRACLE of Love! In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word of God sought His delight among the children of men. He descended into the body of a little babe. This was not sufficient for Love: He comes under the appearances of bread and wine, thus to abide among men for ever, Love's Prisoner, in the tabernacle. We salute Thee, O Jesus-Host, most gracious among the children of men; we salute Thee, O Beloved, heavenly Prisoner, who for ever watchest over us. O Sacred Host! strength of the exiled soul, divine Eucharist, be our unique love, our most delicious thought, now, while we adore Thee beneath Thy sacramental veil; and at the hour of our death come, O Jesus-Host! come, with Mary, to receive and sanctify our last sigh" (*Mgr. Becel*).

II. "They said therefore unto him: What sign therefore dost thou show that we may see,

and may believe thee? What dost thou work? Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall not hunger; and he that believeth in me shall never thirst. All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will not cast out. No man can come to me except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him" (*S. John v.*). "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (*S. John i.*).

III. "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water: so my soul panteth after thee, O God. My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God? My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily: Where is thy God? These things I remembered, and poured out my soul in me: for I shall go over into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the house of God" (*Ps. xli.*).

IV. Prayer of Sister Elisabeth of the Trinity:
O Eternal Word, Word of my God, fain would
I pass my life in listening to Thee, I would
become wholly teachable that I may learn all
of Thee; then across all nights, all voids, all
impotence, I would ever gaze upon Thee,
abiding within Thine immeasurable light. O
loved Star, fascinate me, that I may never
quit Thy radiant light."

Thou hast said: Seek ye my Face. Yea,

Lord, Thy face will I ever seek. Show me, O Lord, the light of Thine adorable Face !

V. "Oh that my soul may seek and pursue Thee by the ardour of her desires, and that, by the violence of her sighings she may show with what a holy impatience she desires to possess Thee. But, Lord, I pray Thee continually to strengthen these desires, lest my soul, allowing herself to become depressed on account of her fragility, fall incessantly into languor and exhaustion. Lord, who dost prepare such magnificent banquets for Thine elect, vouchsafe some crumbs of this bread of angels to my famished soul ! . . .

"The Eucharist! it is therein that we must seek Jesus, and feed upon His love. In heaven, He is for the angels and for the saints; in the Eucharist He is for us men, our unique treasure. There He abides, thinking ever upon us; if we cannot remember Him, let our memory cease to be ! There He covers us beneath His wings, in the mystery of His heart there He presents us to the Father " (*S. Augustine*).

VI. "Let us hunger and thirst for Jesus Christ, for His kingdom, for His justice; for He hungers and thirsts for us; He desires with an ineffable desire to unite us to Himself, and to ceaselessly act upon us and within us by His Spirit, to make us conformable to Him, even until we shall be wholly like unto Him, beholding Him face to face, as He is in Himself" (*Bossuet*).

"It is by love that we reach Jesus; it is by leaving self that we repose in Him" (*Madame Swetchine*). "Jesus Christ demands our ten-

derness; He desires us to present our hearts ceaselessly before Him, He would possess us and unite us to Himself by the most familiar and intimate bonds of affection " (*Faber*).

VII. " It does not need much time to love God, to renew our life in His presence, to raise our heart to Him, or to adore Him from the depth of our heart, to offer to Him all our acts and all our sufferings; and this is the true *Kingdom* of God within us, which nothing can trouble " (*Fénelon*).

" God does not hide Himself from those who seek Him with a pure heart. He says to the soul the word that Pascal heard in his heart: ' Be comforted; thou wouldest not seek Me if thou hadst not found Me ' " (*J. Guibert*).

XXIII

LOVE PURSUING AND PURSUED

I. **L**ORD, Thou lovedst me when I did not love Thee, Thou didst seek me when I wandered far from Thee, Thou rememberedst me when I forgot Thee, Thou didst pardon me when I offended Thee, Thou hast ever followed me when I have striven to hide myself from Thee. Lord, Thou dost abide with me, when I turn away from Thee, Thou drawest me when I yield to the pleasures of the world and of the senses. Christ, Thou hast conquered me when I have denied Thee. Light, Thou hast illuminated me when I have closed my eyes

against Thee, Life Thou hast quickened me when I have languished for the need of Thee !

II. Lord, Thou hast pursued me with Thy providence all the days and in all the events of my life. Thou hast pursued me with Thy longanimity in my many wanderings and errors. Thou hast pursued me with Thy mercy throughout all my sins and infidelities. Thou hast embraced me with Thy pardon in my repentance and in my tears. And when I was yet a great way off from Thee Thou didst perceive me, and, being moved with compassion, Thou didst hasten to welcome and to embrace me. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy face ? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there ; if I descend into hell, thou art present. If I take my wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea : Even there also shall thy hand lead me ; and thy right hand shall hold me " (*Ps. cxxxviii.*).

III. His love has pursued us from eternity down the ages of time ; it has pursued us to the wonder of the Incarnation, to the agony of the Passion ; it has pursued us in the word : *Sitio*, "I thirst ;" it has pursued us to the last drop of the Precious Blood ; to the abasing of Himself under the accidents of bread and wine. It has pursued us through the perversity of our human nature, to the sounding of the abyss of man's heart. It has pursued us to the uttermost abandonment of itself, and to the most secret profundities of our being. "Thou shalt call his name, Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins" (*S. Math. i. 21*).

IV. Prayer of Sister Elisabeth of the Trinity:
“ O consuming Fire, Spirit of Love, so take possession of me that the Word may become as it were incarnate within me; that I may be for Him as it were another humanity in which He may renew His Mystery. And Thou, O Father, incline towards Thy poor little creature, behold in her only Thy well-beloved Son, in Whom Thou hast placed all Thy delights. O my Three! my All, my Beatitude, infinite Solitude, Immensity, wherein I lose myself, I give myself to Thee as a prey; take me, take me, hide Thyself within me that I may hide myself within Thee, until I go to contemplate in Thy light the abyss of Thy grandeurs.

V. “ O my God, Trinity that I adore, help me to forget myself entirely, to establish myself in Thee, motionless and at peace, as if already my soul were in eternity ! Grant that nothing trouble my peace nor cause me to leave Thee, O my Immutable One, but that each instant carry me deeper into the profundity of Thy Mystery. Pacify my soul, make therein Thy heaven, Thy loved dwelling and the place of Thy repose; grant that I leave Thee never there alone, but that I be there entirely, fully awake in my faith, adoring, wholly given up to Thy creative action.”

VI. “ I have sought Thee, my God, and have found Thee; therefore I have no further desire but to love Thee. The ecstasy and strength of this love are so great that, whilst my soul is raised even to Thee by her continual sighings, and while she contemplates Thine ineffable goodness, she is relieved of the weight of the

flesh with its desires in a marvellous manner. The extraordinary troubles of my imagination, and the divers agitations of my thoughts grow calm; my ordinary infirmities cease to depress me; all my senses, exterior and interior, are at peace; my heart is inflamed, my soul in joy, my memory strong, my understanding enlightened, and my mind all aflame with desire to behold Thee, is ravished by the charms of Thy invisible loveliness.

VII. "O that my soul may take the wings and the velocity of love, that she may arrive, by the strength of the rapidity of her flight, at the throne of Thy majesty and Thy glory, and that there she may be filled, in the secrecy of Thy divine essence, with that same light, with that same fire, whereby shineth Thy divine countenance, the unspeakable beauties of which form the ineffable delights with which Thou in Thy mercy rejoicest the citizens of Thy heavenly kingdom. Be our joy, O my God, as Thou art our hope, our salvation, and our redemption; be here below our strength, as Thou wilt be in heaven our triumph, our recompence and our felicity" (*S. Augustine*).

XXIV

JESUS OUR JUDGE

I. "WHO shall accuse against the elect of God? God that justifieth. Who is he that shall condemn? Jesus Christ that died, yea, that is risen also again, who is at

the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . . I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (*Rom.* viii.).

II. "May I live in perpetual fear of Thee, as my Judge," says S. Augustine; and S. Paul: "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (*Rom.* vii.). For S. Paul saw in his members a law contrary to the law of Christ, waging against good. He ever lived in fear of offending the eternal justice. This is the fear of all the Saints, the fear of all souls who love our Lord Jesus Christ. Deliver us, our Father, they pray, from evil, and suffer us not to be tempted. And the promise is given: "He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will make also with temptation issue" (*I Cor.* x.).

III. "For neither doth the Father judge any man: but hath given all judgment to the Son. That all men may honour the Son, as they honour the Father. He who honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father who hath sent him. Amen, amen, I say unto you that he who heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath life everlasting: and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say to you, that the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (*S. John* v.).

IV. "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment. I cannot of myself do anything. As I hear, so I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not my own will, but the will of him that sent me" (*S. John v.*).

"That we may never complain of what we suffer, it is sufficient to remember what we deserve" (*S. John of the Cross*).

Dear Jesus, may we hear Thy voice, as the voice of the Bridegroom in this life, so that our hearts may rejoice in the day of Judgment.

V. God is patient, says S. Augustine, because God is eternal. But after the days of patience comes the day of justice, day of fear, inevitable day, when the works and thoughts of all men shall be revealed to all flesh and before the eyes of God. Let us picture to ourselves that unveiling of all secrets, the vanishing of all the shadows and deceptions of conscience, when we shall be brought face to face with the pure light of God's truth and divine wisdom; when we shall know as we are known. Sweet Jesus, be propitious to us in that day !

VI. Jesus, I love to think that it is Thou who wilt be my Judge; for art not Thou besides my Father, my Brother, my Spouse, my Shepherd, my Teacher, my Physician, my Master, and my Friend? Art not Thou the Truth, which I have believed, the Way wherein I have walked, the Life and Light of my soul, my daily

Food and Nourishment, my Strength, my Joy, my Desire? Art not Thou, O Jesus, my strong and everlasting Hope, my Confidence, and all my Love? Art not Thou my Creator, my Redeemer, my Sanctifier, my God, my King, my First Beginning and my Last End? Who shall separate me, O my Judge, from Thy love? Even so come, Lord Jesus!

VII. "The Wrath of the Lamb!" What terrible words are these! It is as if we said the obliteration of light, or the death of life. What can be more gentle and harmless than a lamb? Who more unutterably sweet and loving than the Lamb of God? S. Teresa thought that the most insupportable of torments would be to see the adorable Face of Jesus regarding her in anger. It was a thought so fearful that she could not endure to entertain it. That, O my Jesus, I could never, never endure. Lord Jesus, perfect love casteth out fear, and I love Thee!

XXV

JESUS OUR PEACE

I. "**T**HESE things I have spoken unto you that in me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world" (*S. John xvi. 33*). Yes, my Jesus, my Peace, it is only with Thee that we may find perfect peace. In the world there is no peace, no rest, no content; whereas Thy blessed presence brings

with it absolute tranquillity and refreshment. Thou hast overcome the world. When the disciples were gathered together for fear of the Jews, " Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you." To assure them and make them glad, He showed them His hands and His side. " The disciples therefore were glad when they saw the Lord. He said therefore to them again: Peace be to you " (*S. John xx.*).

II. " As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When you come into a house, salute it, saying: Peace be to this house. . . . I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves . . ." (*S. Matth. x.*). " Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God " (*S. Matth. v.*).

As the God of Peace has sent Jesus into the world to make peace by the Cross, so Jesus sends us, His children, into the world to bring peace wherever we go. What can be more blessed than peace, freedom from unrest and all agitation, all anxiety and all misery ? With Jesus we shall have this perfect peace; in the world, distress; but He has overcome the world. Then have confidence in Jesus. Abide in Him.

III. " Jesus stood in the midst of them, and saith to them: Peace be to you; it is I, fear not. But they being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts ? See my hands and feet, that it is I myself; handle and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. And when he had said this, he showed

them his hands and feet " (*S. Luke xxiv.*). My Jesus, what inexpressible tenderness dost Thou use towards us; with what patience and compassion and sweet familiarity dost Thou reveal Thyself to us ! O Jesus, what peace Thou bringest to my heart !

IV. Dear Jesus, rebuke the wind and the tempest in my heart. Say, " Peace, be still." Lord, I cry upon Thee to awake Thee; the storm rages, and I am afraid. Speak only, dear Jesus, that I perish not. And the wind will cease, and there shall be a great calm. But no, O Jesus, my peace, Thou art sleeping. Thou sayest to me: " It is I, be not afraid. Why are you fearful ? Have not you faith yet ?" Yes, my Jesus, my Peace; give me but faith; grant only that my faith fail not. It is Thou. I will not be afraid.

V. " Give them eternal rest, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace ! We should be even in this life like the souls in Purgatory, at peace and docile in the hands of God, abandoning ourselves to, and allowing ourselves to be consumed in, the revenging fire of love " (*Fénelon*). O peace of purgatory, O joy of purgatory—to know, my blessed Lord, that I can never more offend Thee. O torment of purgatory—to be as yet not fully united to Jesus ! Jesus, give me here my purgatory. Help me each day to picture to myself that *this moment* is that lost opportunity for which I shall sigh in vain in purgatory.

VI. "The soul abandoned to God is like a living *yes*. Each sigh, each breath, each step she makes is a burning *amen* which goes to join the eternal amen of heaven. This perfect acquiescence with God's will is the very life and peace of the soul. It is all her religion, all her love, all her beatitude. By it she becomes ever more and more a true kingdom of God, a chosen vine, a garden of delights, a beloved abiding-place, a familiar friend. She becomes wholly transformed and impregnated by sanctity; and virtue goes forth from her like a stream from its source" (*Mgr. Gay*).

VII. My Jesus, in order to give us peace from strife, Thou hast laboured and suffered poverty and desolation. To bring us to the waters of refreshment Thou hast suffered agony and sweated Thy precious Blood! O marvellous mystery of peace in Jesus! Astounding mystery of perpetual repose in the hidden life with Jesus, the life of daily work and humble duties, the life of intimate and secret communing with our Peace. Thou callest us all to this life of peace with Thee, dear Jesus: "Come unto Me," sayest Thou. "Learn of Me. You shall find rest to your souls."

XXVI

JESUS OUR SPOUSE

I. **M**Y Jesus, how wonderful are the ways whereby Thou leadest the souls who love Thee and who are athirst for Thee! Sometimes Thou dost overwhelm them with ineffable

joy, sometimes Thou abandonest them to tears; at times Thou hastenest to be found by them; at others, like the Spouse of the divine Canticle, Thou hidest Thyself when they call upon Thee. Oh sweet trials of Thy tenderness and of Thy mercy ! Thus purified, these elect souls become little by little detached from their bonds; they seek Thee with passionate fervour. They sigh perpetually after Thee; they are consumed with the love of Thee and with the desire to behold Thy beauty; they languish in their exile from Thee. They pray without ceasing !

II. "O what an exile is this earth ! I cannot think of this without my heart wellnigh bursting, the tears rushing to my eyes, and the desire for heaven consuming me" (*Mgr. Gay*). And Thou Thyself wilt be my recompense ! O adorable promise of Holy Scripture ! Thou Thyself, Thou alone, without image, without veil, without distance ! Thyself, God, Thyself ! Jesus, the Spouse, no longer hidden ! To be inebriated with Thy light, Thy truth, Thy love ! Thus the love of God is with us from eternity to eternity. We come from the Heart of God, we return to the Heart of God. O Love, that no ingratitude can annul, that no word can express ! . . .

III. "Put abandonment and confidence in place of all other acts; therein consists the perfect love of Jesus Christ. Adore Him in your impotence. If He has captivated you, rest at peace in His bonds; let your silence and your stillness, your weakness and your poverty, speak to Him. He knows all you would say to Him, all the love you would express, all you

would do to please Him, for it is He Himself who has inspired you with His love and His grace" (*Bossuet*). In quietness and in confidence is our strength; in leaving everything to Jesus, our Spouse, in leaving Him to act for us in all things.

IV. How restless is the heart, Lord Jesus, until it rest in Thee! "By night I sought him whom my soul loveth. I sought him and found him not. I will rise and will go about the city: in the streets and the broadways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him and I found him not. The watchman who kept the city found me: Have you seen him whom my soul loveth? When I had a little passed by them, I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him: and I will not let him go. . . . Put me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm, for love is strong as death" (*Cant. iii.*).

V. Jesus, my Spouse, let me share all things with Thee. I would be united to Thee every moment of my life. Give me to be truly one with Thee, to share in Thy sorrow and in Thy joy. Jesus, give me a great love of Thy sufferings. May I unite myself to Thy dolorous Passion, and never, for one moment, turn away from Thy Cross. I would be, O my Jesus, one of Thy chosen and intimate friends, to whom Thou mayest safely confide Thy precious Cross. Thou didst suffer for the sins of the world! Give me, O my Love, my Jesus, to suffer with Thee, to expiate somewhat for my own sins and for the sins of the world.

VI. The only real sufferers in this life are they who suffer unwillingly. To suffer with love

and with the will, for Jesus and with Jesus, to suffer for our own sins and for the sins of others, is to be united with the Spouse. Dear Jesus, I would place myself with Thee upon the Cross. I would be never separated from Thee. I give myself, I give myself. Do with me what Thou wilt; only let me be never separated from Thee. Within Thy Wounds hide me. In the hour of my death call me, and bid me come to Thee, that with Thy Saints I may praise Thee for all eternity. Amen.

VII. And the consolations of the Spouse—What are these? In this world what unutterable joy is it to somewhat perceive Thee at moments across the many dense veils of darkness that enshroud my vision and conceal Thee. My soul is ravished beyond herself with delight, O Jesus, when Thou dost dart one single ray of Thy light and of Thy beauty into the depths of her impenetrable ignorance. And, hereafter, what rapture do not we expect from Thee? “And when I had seen him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying: Fear not. I am the first and the last” (*Apoc. i.*).

XXVII

THE FIDELITY OF LOVE

I. “**H**E is faithful who hath called you” (*1 Thess. v.*). God loves those who love Him. He overwhelms with His favours those who seek Him in love. Consequently, the more one loves God, the more one may hope

from His goodness. "Ask, and it shall be given you," says our Saviour; "knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh findeth and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (*S. Luke xi.*). For our Father in heaven is faithful, and will "give good gifts to them that ask Him" (*S. Matth. vii.*).

II. "He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High, shall abide under the protection of the God of Jacob. He shall say to the Lord: Thou art my protector, and my refuge: my God, in him will I trust. For he hath delivered me from the snare of the hunters: and from the sharp word. He will overshadow thee with his shoulders: and under his wings thou shalt trust. His truth shall compass thee with a shield: thou shalt not be afraid of the terror of the night. Of the arrow that flieth in the day, of the business that walketh about in the dark: of invasion, or of the noon-day devil" (*Ps. xc.*).

III. "Thou, O Lord, art my hope: thou hast made the Most High thy refuge. There shall no evil come to thee: nor shall the scourge come near thy dwelling. For he hath given his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up: lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Because he hoped in me I will deliver him: I will protect him because he hath known my name. He shall cry to me, and I will hear him: I am with him in tribulation. I will deliver him, and I will glorify him. I will fill him with length of days; and I will show him my salvation" (*Ps. xc.*).

IV. "With the Lord shall the steps of a man be directed, and he shall like well his way. When he shall fall he shall not be bruised, for the Lord putteth his hand under him. I have been young and now am old; and I have not seen the just forsaken, nor his seed seeking bread. Decline from evil and do good, and dwell for ever and ever. For the Lord loveth judgment, and will not forsake his saints: they shall be preserved for ever" (*Ps. xxxvi.*). "Unless the Lord had been my helper, my soul had almost dwelt in hell. If I said: my foot is moved: thy mercy, O Lord, assisted me" (*Ps. xciii. 17, 18*).

V. Nothing can ever be wanting to the soul who walks with God. "Enoch walked with God, and he was seen no more, because God took him" (*Gen. v. 24*). What is it whether such a soul go to life or to death, to heaven or to purgatory, to consolation or to desolation? If God is with us, who is against us? We are in the immensity of God, led by the will of God, always returning through divers ways, but always returning to God. Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, God is with us, we with Him. Nothing is wanting. God has already taken us to Himself. We, as apart from God, are no more.

VI. God is faithful who has called us. God is "faithful who promised" (*Heb. xi.*). He demands that we correspond to Him by our faith. He said to the leper that He had cleansed: "Arise, go thy way, for thy faith hath made thee whole" (*S. Luke xvii.*). And: "According to your faith be it done unto you"

(*S. Matth.* ix.). “ Have the faith of God, and all things whatsoever you shall ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive: and they shall come unto you ” (*S. Mark* xi.). How frequently our Blessed Lord exhorts us to have faith, and reproaches us for our little faith ! “ Lord, I believe. Help Thou my unbelief ” (*S. Mark* ix.). Jesus does but little for them who have not faith. “ Do you believe that I can do this unto you ? ” (*S. Matt.* ix.). “ He wrought not many miracles there because of their unbelief ” (*S. Matth.* xiii.).

VII. “ And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that the ship was filled. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, sleeping upon a pillow: and they awake him, and say to him: Master, doth it not concern thee that we perish ? And rising up, he rebuked the wind, and said to the sea: Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was made a great calm. And he said to them: Why are ye fearful ? Have you not faith yet ? And they feared exceedingly: and they said one to another: Who is this (thinkest thou) that both wind and sea obey him ? ” (*S. Mark* iv.).

XXVIII

LOVE, THE SERVANT

I. “ **T**O Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, who dwellest in heaven. Behold as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid are on

the hands of her mistress: so are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until he have mercy on us" (*Ps. cxxii.*). "O my God, is this a small thing that Thou hast called us to Thy service? A great and marvellous thing is it that Thou deignest to accept the service of so poor and miserable a creature as I, and to admit me among the servants whom Thou callest Thy friends. All that I have, all that I can give—my will, my desire, my love, my actions—I consecrate to Thy service.

II. "And yet, Lord, taking, as it were, my place, Thou servest me more than I serve Thee. Behold the heaven and the earth that Thou hast created for the service of man are before Thee, and daily do they execute all that Thou commandest them. Still more: Thou hast prepared for man the ministry of angels. But that which surpasses all is that Thou Thyself hast deigned to serve man, and hast promised to give Thyself to him. O my God, what can I render to Thee for all Thy goodness? O that I might serve Thee all the days of my life! O that for one single day I might serve Thee worthily" (*Imitation*, bk. iii., chap. x.).

III. "Let us endeavour on all occasions to think of the pleasures of others, and to sacrifice our own to them. Kindness and humility are almost one and the same thing. When one is kind, one feels drawn to give oneself, to sacrifice oneself, to make little of oneself, and this is humility! That which makes pride more hateful than any other vice is not only because it wounds our personal self-love, but because we feel therein the absence of kindness, without

which virtue it is impossible to gain love. Be kind, then, and you will infallibly be humble. Your eyes, your lips, your brow, will all be imprinted with a new expression, and all will be attracted to you. . . ." (*Lacordaire*).

IV. "Let love be without dissimulation. Hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good. Loving one another with the charity of brotherhood, in honour preventing one another. In carefulness not slothful. In spirit fervent. Serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulation. Instant in prayer. Communicating to the necessities of the saints. Pursuing hospitality. Bless them that persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice: weep with them that weep. Being of one mind one toward another. Not minding high things, but consenting to the humble. Be not wise in your own conceits. To no man rendering evil for evil. Providing good things, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men" (*Rom. xii.*).

V. "It is a great honour, a great glory, to serve Thee, and to despise all things for Thee. For they who willingly subject themselves to Thy most holy service shall have great grace. They shall experience the most sweet consolation of the Holy Spirit, who for the love of Thee have cast away carnal delight. O pleasant and delightful service of God, which maketh a man truly free and holy! O sacred state of religious servitude, which maketh men equal to angels, pleasing to God, terrible to the devils, and praiseworthy by all the faithful. O servitude, lovely, and ever to be desired, in which

we are rewarded with the greatest good, and joy is acquired that will never end!" (*Imitation*, bk. iii., chap. x.).

VI. Lord, how easy is Thy yoke, how light is Thy burden! Thy yoke, O Jesus, is a yoke of joy and of glory; Thy burden, an eternal weight of amazing love. O Jesus, Thy yoke is freedom from all oppression and slavery to evil; and Thy burden the torrent of graces and heavenly consolations that Thou lavishest upon Thy servants. My Master and my blessed Lord, lay Thy most sweet yoke upon me, that I may be for ever bound to Thy service. Overwhelm me, O Jesus, with the sweetest burden of Thy love, that I may be wholly unable to ever leave Thee again.

VII. Thou, Blessed Master, didst not come to do Thine own will, but Thy Father's. All Thy life was spent in ministering to Thy creatures. Thou wast among them as He who serves. And Thou gavest us this example, and didst teach us this lesson with great emphasis, saying: "Amen, amen, I say unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord: neither is the apostle greater than he that sent him" (*S. John* xiii.). O Jesus, may we ever imitate Thy wonderful example of humility, and spend our entire lives in serving others for the love of Thee, and in obedience to Thy commands, our Lord and Master!

XXIX

JESUS OUR SOVEREIGN BEATITUDE

I. FATHER FABER says: "All things are falling upon God." We all come from God. All creation is in movement, hastening . . . whither? back to God. Jesus said: "And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me: That they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. I in them, and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me" (*S. John xvii. 20, 21, 24*).

II. "God Himself, and not any of His created rewards, is our last end, God possessed, our own God. This is creation's home. This is our last end. There only is our rest. . . . And one thing we know, that *personal love of God is the only thing that reaches God at last*. Other things—they look well, they begin well, they sound good, but—they wander; they are on no path; they go aside or they fall behind, but home they never come. Personal love of God! this, then, is the conclusion of the whole. To love God because He desires our love, to love Him because He first loved us and with such a surpassing love, to love our Creator because

He redeemed us, and our Redeemer because He created us, to love Him as our Creator in all the orders of nature, grace and glory, and finally to love Him for His own sake, because of His infinite perfections—this, and this alone, is religion" (*Faber*).

III. If the lesser heavenly bodies were to cease from their individual motion, they would, by the law of attraction, fall into the greater body which is the centre of their system. It is only by the industries and complications of our natures that our union with God is delayed. When the mind wanders from God it is because love is not yet perfect. It is because we are complicated that union is not easy. Union is simplicity. Love is simple. God is simple. Everything is in movement—hurrying—traveling—whither? Away from God or towards Him. Our tendencies are either simplifying or diversifying. The spirit of worldliness carries us away from God and complicates us; the spirit of love calms and lessens our individual movement and tends to union, drawing us into God. "Draw me; we will run after thee," says the Spouse of the Canticles to her Well-Beloved (*Cant. i.*). Draw us, O Lord, ever so little, and we shall run, yes, fly to unite ourselves to Thee, regardless of all other things.

IV. "Heaven is not a sensuous paradise. God is the joy and the beauty and the contentment there; all is for God, all from God, all to God, all in God, all round God, as the beautiful central fire about which His happy creatures cluster in amazement and delight. Whereas in worldliness God is the discomfort of the whole

thing, an intrusion, an unseasonable thought, an inharmonious presence, like a disagreeable uninvited guest, irritating and fatiguing us by the simple demand his presence makes on our suffrance and our courtesy. Surely such a man has sin in his veins instead of blood ! Worldliness, then, is a life of secret sins . . ." (*Faber*). To know God is the great end of the Christian life, to walk in His presence is the whole of sanctity.

V. "God is all for the soul. The soul breathes, God is her atmosphere. The soul hungers and thirsts, and in God she finds her daily bread and her fountain of living water. The soul journeys, God is her way. The soul reflects and understands, God is her truth, her fact. The soul speaks, God is her word. She loves, God is her love" (*Mgr. de la Bouillerie*). Yes, my Jesus, I am hastening to Thee. Soon my body shall be in the earth, and my soul shall appear in Thy presence. Soon the time to seek Thee shall be finished, and the time to find Thee come. Soon the time of these afflictions shall be passed, and the eternity of joy commenced. Soon the gate which is called death shall open for me the life of blessed union with Thee. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

VI. He who has been wounded with the love of Jesus is already dead to the world. For him the world has ended; he is in paradise and, as it were, transported into eternity. He thinks of death, not with fear, but with joy, as being the gate to the blessed life. The uncertain and sorrowful journey through the vale of tears of this life is but the narrow passage to an eternity

of ineffable bliss and delight. He seeks the face of God every moment of his existence, forgetting the things that are behind, the things of time and circumstance, and hastening to his end. All things of time lead to eternity.

VII. "One act of the love of God is a masterpiece. An act of love is a complete act; the effects thereof are more powerful, the consequences more important than the effects and consequences of any other act. And what constitutes an act of love? A look of the heart, which, with lightning rapidity, pierces heaven. And such acts may be multiplied to an incalculable amount, and in the midst of occupations most calculated to distract. An act of love to God is the most durable and most solid thing ever created. In comparison with this great reality, all the rest is but a vain chimera; all the rest is void of sense, illusive, and transitory" (*Faber*).

XXX

JESUS MOST AMIABLE

I. JESUS is most loving. There have been noble and generous benefactors of mankind, but none have ever loved like Jesus Christ. He loves all: sinners, the ignorant, the wicked, the poor, the miserable. He has loved from all eternity, when we were yet uncreated, when we were yet in our sins. He loves from eternity, and to eternity. Who shall ever separate us from the love of Christ? He loves absolutely.

He, a God, leaves 'His glory, takes human flesh upon Him, immolates Himself for love of us, to the last drop of His blood. He gives Himself entirely to us, to be ever with us, our daily bread. He is ever present on our altars. His love refuses us nothing, holds back nothing. He loves with abandonment. None has ever loved like Him.

II. No one is so lovely as Jesus. Most beautiful among the sons of men, and altogether lovely. "Ah, beauty ! so ancient and so new," exclaims S. Augustine; "how late have I commenced to love thee!" The charm and personal attraction of Jesus was so great that one look was sufficient to convert: one word, "Follow Me," was sufficient to attach disciples to Himself for ever. The magnetism of His ineffable beauty, comes down the ages, captivating all hearts. "Draw me; we will run after thee to the odour of thy ointments" (*Cant. i. 2*). S. Paul was struck to the earth by a vision of that loveliness, and from that moment was converted from Saul, the persecutor, to Paul, the ardent lover of Jesus, in such wise that his lips could never refrain themselves from uttering the beloved Name, and his heart became as the Heart of Christ. The Apostles were so overwhelmed with the beauty of the Lord upon Thabor that they became as intoxicated, and knew not what they said.

III. "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema!" cries S. Paul, the Doctor of nations. No man who has ever lived is so loved as Jesus—so universally loved.

It has been stated that if the Name of Jesus be pronounced in a large assembly, it is impossible for any to hear it with indifference. Some will be excited to love, to different degrees, others to hate. But none can hear it wholly unmoved. No man who has ever lived has inspired such love, undiminishing and intense, throughout the centuries. His love has inspired millions of martyrdoms, the heroic virtues of the Saints, long lives spent in a passion of loving contemplation, in a passion of active service, long lives of self-renunciation and suffering. The love of Jesus is the greatest motive force in the universe.

IV. No one has ever been so lovable as Jesus. He attracts and invites all to come to Him: "Come unto me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (*S. Matth. xi. 28*). No one is so easy of access. Consider His goodness with publicans and sinners, who sit down with Him; His tenderness to sinners, lepers, and the sick, who come to Him for pardon, cleansing, and healing; His patience with the ignorant and simple, who cleave to Him as to their Lord and Master; His invitations to and caressing of the little children; His silence and magnanimity with His enemies; His suffering of the kiss of Judas: "Friend, whereto art thou come?" (*S. Matth. xxvi.*). No one is so easy of access as Jesus. What can be more easy to approach than our daily bread? Jesus is always with us in the Tabernacle.

V. "O how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden from them that fear thee? Which thou hast wrought

for them that hope in thee, in the sight of the sons of men. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy face, from the disturbance of men. Thou shalt protect them in thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues. Blessed be the Lord, for he hath shown his wonderful mercy to me in a fortified city" (*Ps. xxx. 20, 22*). The Heart of Jesus is always open to us; His arms are ever outstretched to us; His Head ever inclined towards us; His Feet are ever awaiting us; His whole Body ever immolated for us.

VI. O goodness of Jesus! Who can resist the goodness that so pressingly invites all to approach Thee? Come unto Me—all! I will relieve and comfort you. Am I not your Creator who will give you all you need, your Redeemer who will save you from your sins, your Physician who will heal all your ills, your Brother who will cheer you, your Spouse who will satisfy you? O goodness of Jesus, it is to all that Thou speakest thus, to the little ones, to the sick, to the poor, to the sinners, to the ignorant, to all who are burdened with any infirmity of the body, of the mind, or of the soul. O excessive goodness of Jesus! Thou promisest relief to all who respond to this most sweet invitation.

VII. How unlike to our narrow and frail hearts is Thine infinite Heart, O my Jesus! We are unable to bear with human imperfections; we are ever susceptible to wounds or injuries; we make our choices and our exceptions. But Thine infinite Heart is open to all.

Thou dost refuse admission to none; but Thou dost yearn to receive all into Thy love. Thou art not repelled by the kiss of Judas the traitor, but callest him Thy friend. The denial of Peter draws from Thee only a look of tender reproach. The cruelties of Thine executioners, the prayer: Father, forgive them. The touch of the leper does not offend Thee, nor the impurity of the sinner scandalize Thee. The simplicity of the ignorant does not weary Thee. Thy Heart knows no weariness, but is always open to all.

XXXI

JESUS MOST ADMIRABLE

I. “O LORD, our Lord, how admirable is thy name in all the earth!” (*Ps. viii.*). “The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands. Day to day uttereth speech, and night to night sheweth knowledge. The law of the Lord is unspotted, converting souls: the testimony of the Lord is faithful, giving wisdom to little ones. The practices of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts: the commandment of the Lord is lightsome, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is holy, enduring for ever and ever: the judgments of the Lord are true, justified in themselves. More to be desired than gold and many precious stones: and sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. For thy servant keepeth them, and in keeping them there is great reward!” (*Ps. xvii.*).

II. Would we have heaven upon earth ? There can be no greater joy than in that lively faith which is steadfastly convinced that God always orders our concerns in the most admirable manner. Even when it would seem that He destroys and crushes us ; when He brings to naught our worthiest designs ; when He extinguishes our light in our prayer ; when He destroys our health by infirmities and languors ; when He fills us with the sense of our own impotence and misery and of repugnance for sufferings and spiritual fears. If in all these conditions we can say : How admirable are Thy ways, O God, Thy thoughts are ravishing ! This is heaven upon earth.

III. " Praise ye the Lord, because psalm is good: to our God be joyful and comely praise. Who healeth the broken of heart, and bindeth up their bruises. Who telleth the number of the stars: and calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and great is his power: and of his wisdom there is no number. The Lord lifteth up the meek: and he bringeth the wicked down even to the ground. Sing ye to the Lord with praise: sing to our God upon the harp. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth. Who maketh grass to grow on the mountains, and herbs for the service of men. Who giveth to beasts their food: and to the young ravens that call upon him. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him: and in them that hope in his mercy " (Ps. cxlvi.).

IV. " It was to make the number of His elect that God quitted His eternal repose and created

the world. For this was it that the Word was made Flesh, and that He died upon the Cross: for this that He became our Prisoner in the Eucharist, and each day immolates Himself anew. For this cause there is a Church, priests, sacraments. And when the number of His elect are complete, the world will cease to exist. Ah ! if we but understood what a sublime creature is man, and how much God loves him after having created him to this end ! Should we be able to think of anything else but to concur with His adorable designs ?" (*Mauduit*).

V. "All wisdom is from the Lord God, and hath been always with him, and is before all time. The fear of the Lord is honour and glory, and gladness and a crown of joy. The fear of the Lord shall delight the heart, and shall give joy and gladness and length of days. With him that feareth the Lord it shall go well in the latter end, and in the day of his death he shall be blessed. The love of God is honourable wisdom" (*Ecclius.* ii.). "Whatsoever the Lord pleased he hath done, in heaven, in earth, in the sea, in all the days. The Lord is high and looketh on the low: and the high he knoweth afar off. The Lord will repay for me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: O despise not the works of thy hands" (*Ps. cxxxvii.*).

VI. "Ye that fear the Lord, believe him: and your reward shall not be made void. Ye that fear the Lord, hope in him: and mercy shall come to you for your delight. Ye that fear the Lord, love him: and your hearts shall be enlightened. They that fear the Lord will seek after the things that are well pleasing to

him: and they that love him shall be filled with his law. They that fear the Lord will prepare their hearts, and in his sight will sanctify their souls" (*Ecclus.* ii.).

VII. "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will and it shall be done unto you. In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love" (*S. John* xv.). "The Father himself loveth you: because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world" (*S. John* xvi.).

XXXII

LOVE IN SUFFERING

I. "WE glory also in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience trial; and trial hope. And hope confoundeth not, because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost who is given to us" (*Rom.* v. 3-5). "Many are the afflictions of the just: but out of them all will the Lord deliver them. The Lord keepeth all their bones, not one of them shall be broken. The Lord will redeem the

souls of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall offend" (*Ps. xxxiii.*).

II. "I will love thee, O Lord my strength: the Lord is my firmament, my refuge and my deliverer. My God is my helper, and in him will I put my trust. My protector and the horn of my salvation, and my support. Praising I will call upon the Lord: and I shall be saved from my enemies. The sorrows of death surrounded me: and the torrents of iniquity troubled me. The sorrows of hell encompassed me: and the snares of death prevented me. In my affliction I called upon the Lord, and I cried to my God; and he heard my voice from his holy temple: and my cry before him came into his ears" (*Ps. xvii. 1-7*).

III. Let us consider the action of God upon the soul. The effects of God's actions are purely spiritual and imperceptible. The first effect of divine action upon the soul is suffering. All love, even human love, causes suffering, suffering of the heart, of the mind, and of the body. And every soul that is wounded with the divine love is marked with the cross. Every soul that is loved by God and who loves God must suffer. With men, if they love they strive mutually to bring happiness and well-being to the loved ones. But God's action in this world is otherwise. The greater the action of God's love upon the soul, the greater will be the suffering caused thereby; for God's action is against human nature, and thence results struggle and warfare.

IV. Again, God sends to those whom He loves direct suffering, as a special mark of His

favour. He chastises every son whom He receives; with sufferings of all kinds, physical, moral, spiritual. The cross is never wanting to the friends of God. It will always be given, and as much as God wills. The cross is never wanting—but we are sometimes wanting to the cross! So few people suffer well. Yet God's chastisements are never purely penal, but always for our healing and for our good. When the soul is sufficiently purified by suffering, God removes the cross.

V. Suffering is always relative; whereas happiness is absolute, for we are created for happiness and not for suffering. We must suffer with love and with our will, or the cross is without value. The greatest imaginable pain is to suffer against the will; then indeed suffering becomes insupportable and crushing. But when one suffers with love, the cross enters into the soul, and the joy of suffering for Christ and with Him outweighs the pain. God strikes always there where He sees we need most to suffer. All the ways of God are admirable! Commenting upon the Psalm: I will be with him in tribulations, I will deliver him and glorify him—S. Bernard says: "Lord, give me always tribulations, that Thou mayest be always with me."

VI. "I have loved, because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. Because he hath inclined his ear upon me: in my days I will call upon him. The sorrows of death have compassed me: and the perils of hell have found me. I met with trouble and sorrow: and I called upon the name of the Lord, O Lord,

deliver my soul. The Lord is merciful and just, and our God sheweth mercy. . . . The Lord is the keeper of little ones: I was humbled and he delivered me. Turn, O my soul, into thy rest: for the Lord hath been bountiful to thee. For he hath delivered my soul from death: my eyes from tears, my feet from falling; I will please the Lord in the land of the living" (*Ps. cvii.*).

VII. Sufferings, then, are a sign of God's signal favour to us, who gives us opportunity here to purify our souls by the bearing of our cross with love and goodwill, and so of hastening our arrival in our heavenly home. Moreover, He always hears those who call upon Him in their distress, and never abandons them. When S. Peter began to sink in the water, and cried upon the Lord, our Saviour immediately upheld him with His hand. And David exclaims: "Though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me" (*Ps. xxii.*). S. Paul, to encourage us in suffering, says: "Think diligently upon him that endured such opposition from sinners against himself: that you be not wearied, fainting in your minds. For you have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (*Heb. xii. 3, 4*).

XXXIII

LOVE IN JOY

I. "ALWAYS rejoice," (*I Thess.* v.), says S. Paul. And the Apostles rejoiced "that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus" (*Acts* v.). And, from that time forth joy has ever remained as the characteristic of the friends of Jesus. How they love one another! must always be remarked of the friends of Christ. And this love is not manifested by sadness nor by obduracy, but by an interior peace and an outward happiness, which communicates itself to all that is exterior, persons and conditions. All must be well with him who possesses Jesus, and this well-being must infallibly produce calm and happiness and freedom from all care.

II. *Magnificat* should be continually swelling our heart and rising to our lips, for the innumerable moments of joy which God in His gracious love and condescension vouchsafes to us. What numberless joys in His creation and in our own physical well-being, the beauty of the universe and of our own world, the pleasures of warmth, of comfort, of light, of health, the negative pleasures of freedom from pain, deformity, or sorrow; the torrents of mental and spiritual pleasures, the intercourse with friends, and the enjoyments of the intellect; the ineffable joy granted to us every moment, never refused to us for one instant, of the obligation

to love and serve God; and then the supreme and eternal joy of abiding in His love, which we may taste with every breath we breathe.

* III. " My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready: I will sing and will give praise with my glory. Arise, my glory: arise, psaltery and harp. I will arise in the morning early, I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people " (*Ps. cvii.*). " I set the Lord always in my sight: for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved. Therefore my heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced: moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope. . . . Thou hast made known to me the way of life, thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance: at thy right hand are delights even to the end " (*Ps. xv.*).

IV. David was a man after God's heart. David's whole life was spent in giving praise to God. He rejoiced before Him continually, with the most beautiful psalms of praise, and the loveliest melodies of musical instruments. He prayed to the Lord with all his might; his entire heart and all his affections were given and perpetually presented to God. " Sing joyfully to God, all the earth: serve ye the Lord with gladness: Come in before his presence with exceeding great joy. Know ye that the Lord, he is God: he made us and not we ourselves. We are his people and the sheep of his pasture . . . give glory to him. Praise ye his name: for the Lord is sweet, his mercy endureth for ever " (*Ps. xcix.*).

V. From his youth, when he was with his sheep, David's heart was ever rejoicing in the

Lord: "I will love thee, O Lord my strength: The Lord is my firmament, my refuge and my deliverer . . . thou hast given gladness in my heart" (*Ps. xvii.*). "In peace in the selfsame I will sleep and I will rest: For thou, O Lord, singularly hast settled me in hope" (*Ps. iv.*). When he had sinned and fallen away from God, he cries out with ardent and loving repentance: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy. . . . Restore unto me the *joy* of thy salvation, and strengthen me with a perfect spirit" (*Ps. l.*). David, himself full of joy and love, brought pleasure and joy to all who beheld him. All who looked on him loved him greatly. He communicated his joy in the Lord to others.

VI. "So greatly fascinated is the world by the pleasures of sense and the passions that it can comprehend nothing of the felicity of the children of God. Sometimes it pities them, as the world pities, with contempt; sometimes it considers them with a sort of stupid wonder. It has not the remotest idea of what takes place in a soul that is united with her Creator, no idea whatever of the consolations and delicious calm which she enjoys. S. Paul exclaiming: I abound in joy in the midst of my tribulations, is an inexplicable mystery to it; it knows nothing of that pure joy which is righteousness and peace in the Holy Spirit.

VII. "And what is the portion of a servant of the world? An immense weariness, enlivened by some few pleasures, and, when God has not altogether abandoned him, remorse. Search his heart; you will find but this therein.

O Christian souls, detached from the world, pity in your turn, those unfortunate ones who groan under such heavy chains. And humiliate yourselves beneath the feet of Him, who by His grace has delivered you from such servitude, and brought you to the glorious liberty of the children of God. Beg of Him, with love and an infinite gratitude, that, after having given you here a foretaste of His joy, He will consummate it in you one day in His heaven "*(Reflections on the Imitation of Christ)*.

XXXIV

LOVE IN DESOLATION

I. "I KNOW that my Redeemer liveth, and I in the last day, in my flesh I shall see God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another: this my hope is laid up in my bosom" (*Job xix.*). The purest trial of our exile in this world is to be withheld from the vision of God. He is always a God hidden from us. We cry upon Him from the abyss of our misery. He remains silent, invisible. Sometimes we hear within us a voice of weariness and complaint: Where is thy God? our discouragement seems to ask us. But in the darkness of faith, we reply: True, I do not see Him, but He beholds me. I do not hear Him, but He hears me. I do not touch Him, but He leads me; He understands all the secrets of my heart. He is nearer to me than I am to myself. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that with my eyes I shall see God.

II. O Love, when I behold Thee, desolate and abandoned upon the Cross, when I behold Thee forsaken by all Thy friends, mocked and derided, outraged and crowned with thorns and in the hands of Thy enemies, when I behold Thee scourged, O Lamb of God, my Jesus, when I consider Thy unutterable agony in the Garden, whilst Thy disciples slept. When I hear Thee, O God, O Saviour, cry aloud in Thy extreme desolation: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? When I behold myself denying Thee, fleeing from Thee, hiding from Thee by my sins, O Love! my heart is ready to break with sorrow, with repentance and with love.

III. "How insular and pathetically solitary are all the people we know!"* exclaims a non-Christian philosopher. And a non-Christian poet says:

"For to tread life's dismaying wilderness,
Without one smile to cheer, one voice to bless,
Amid the sneers and scoffs of human kind,
Is hard . . ."†

But the Christian soul is "never less alone than when alone."‡ The Christian soul is "alone with the Alone!" says S. John of the Cross. Every soul is solitary, from birth, throughout the whole of life, at death. God is the Great Solitary. Solitude without God is desolation. But with God solitude is bliss. "Out of the depths, I have cried to Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice . . ." (*Ps. cxxix.*). "With the Lord there is mercy: and with him plentiful redemption" (*Ps. cxxix.*).

* Emerson.

† Shelley.

‡ Newman.

IV. Out of the depths. . . . The heart of man is an abyss. . . . My God, without Thee, what desolation, what darkness, what impotence, what ignorance! *Sine tuo numine, nihil est in homine.* Without Thee, there is nothing, nothing is in man; and worse than nothing: *nihil est innoxium*, nothing but evil. O God, I cry to Thee from this abyss of my misery. Lord, hear my voice. My Father, Jesus, who art love, hear my voice. For with Thee there is mercy and love and plentiful redemption—plentiful redemption, Lord, which shall fully console my desolation, which shall illumine my darkness, which shall supply my incompetence, which shall instruct my ignorance. Dear Jesus, give me this plentiful redemption.

V. A long and aimless life of thoughtless wrongdoing, of indifference to God, and of the perpetrating of many acts of violence and blasphemy. A life void of charity, without friends, without the gracious influence of home or of loved and near ones! And, such a life to terminate by punishment which its crimes had fully merited, the torment of crucifixion . . . what desolation! But in this abyss of misery, a light arises, and faith is born in the heart of Dismas. He confesses, he hopes, he loves. No longer then was he desolate in his desolation, for he suffered "indeed justly" (*S. Luke xxiii.*) with his will and with his heart. His eyes were henceforth fixed upon his Saviour. His abyss was filled up with God's plentiful redemption.

VI. "Though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they

have comforted me" (*Ps. xxiii.*). "He will overshadow thee with his shoulders: and under his wings thou shalt trust. His truth shall compass thee with a shield: thou shalt not be afraid of the terror of the night, of the arrow that flieth in the day, of the business that walketh about in the dark: of invasion, or of the noon-day devil" (*Ps. xc.*). "You shall pray to me, and I will hear you. You shall seek me and shall find me: when you shall seek me with all your heart" (*Jer. xxix.*).

VII. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord" (*Job i.*). My God, my God, let me not attach my heart to any earthly thing, that I may attach myself wholly to Thee. My God, despoil me and deprive me of all my own will. Lead me into a desert place, O Father, and there speak to my heart. If I find desolation in the world, it is because I do not as yet possess Thee. Come, Lord Jesus; blessed in all things be the name of the Lord.

XXXV

LOVE IN POVERTY

I. "FOR you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich he became poor, for your sakes; that through his poverty you might be rich" (*2 Cor. viii.*). And the disciples left all and followed Him. This

then, good Jesus, is how Thou wilt have us to become rich by Thy poverty, to leave all and to follow Thee, who givest us all things richly to enjoy, who by becoming poor and in leaving the riches of Thy glory hast given Thyself to us. It is Thy very poverty, Lord, Thy very destitution, Thy thirst for our souls, the sweetness of Thy Sacred Humanity, that calls to us: "Follow Me!"

II. "Jesus looking on him loved him, and said to him: one thing is wanting to thee: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (*S. Mark x.*). "And Jesus looking round about, saith to his disciples: How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus again said to them: Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. . . . And Peter began to say unto him: Behold we have left all things, and have followed thee. . . . And Jesus answering said: Amen, I say to you . . . in the world to come you shall have life everlasting" (*S. Mark x.*).

III. Behold, Good Master, how greatly we desire to please Thee. And Thou looking on us, lovest us, and invitest us to leave all and to follow Thee. Yes, Lord Jesus, we will willingly detach our hearts from all affection for and confidence in the riches of this world. We will follow Thee, using all the goods that Thou givest us for Thy glory and Thy service alone. See, Lord, how great is our poverty and our need. We are sick and destitute, weak and

poor; we have nothing good, nothing desirable, but what Thou in Thy love wilt give us, and the only gift we desire of Thee, dear Jesus, is the Gift of God, Thy infinite Love.

IV. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (*S. Matth. v.*). "He hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away" (*S. Luke i.*). Thou wilt save the humble people. God, who is a jealous God, wills not that we desire any other treasure than Himself. He will have us poor and humble before Him, that He may Himself enrich us with the treasures of His grace. The rich He sends empty away from Him, unless it be that their hearts are poor and humble, that they acknowledge their misery, and that their treasure is not of this world.

V. "I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall be always in my mouth. . . . I sought the Lord, and he heard me: and he delivered me from all my troubles. Come ye to him and be enlightened: and your face shall not be confounded. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him: and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear him: and shall deliver them. O taste and see that the Lord is sweet: blessed is the man that hopeth in him. Fear the Lord, all ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The rich have wanted and have suffered hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good" (*Ps. xxxiii.*).

VI. If we receive but little from God, it is because we do not love Him much. For the goodness and bounty of God is infinite, and infinite are His gifts to those who love Him with all their heart. But God loves an empty heart that He may fill it with His riches: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill" (*S. Matth.* v.). If we offer to Him all our poverty, He will give us in return His riches. If we offer Him our sufferings, He will reward us with His glory. If we follow Him through the tribulations of this life, He promises us His eternal companionship in heaven.

VII. Jesus loved poverty. He embraced it and made it for ever beautiful, taking away all the reproach thereof by His own adorable example. He weaned the hearts of all His lovers from earthly goods and earthly cares to the love of His own Sacred Person, and to confidence in the heavenly Father's providence. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things" (*S. Matth.* vi.). He tells us not to be solicitous about the morrow, but to pray to our Father in heaven to give us our daily bread. And our Father who is in heaven will hear us. And according to our faith, and according to our love it shall be done to us.

XXXVI

LOVE IN TRIBULATION

I. "BLESSED is he that understandeth concerning the needy and poor: the Lord will deliver him in the evil day. The Lord preserve him and give him life, and make him blessed upon the earth: and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies. The Lord help him on his bed of sorrow: thou hast turned all his couch in his sickness" (*Ps. xl. 1-4*). "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me: for my soul trusteth in thee. And in the shadow of thy wings will I hope, until iniquity pass away. I will cry to God the Most High; to God who hath done good to me. He hath sent from heaven and delivered me: God hath sent his mercy and his truth, and he hath delivered my soul" (*Ps. lvi.*).

II. There is no loving Jesus Christ without suffering, and great suffering. The Cross is food for the love of God, as wood is food for fire. Jesus said: "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross daily" (*S. Luke ix.*). Yes, Jesus, Thou didst tell us with our own hands to take it, and upon our own shoulders to bear it. Is my cross heavy, does it weigh upon me and afflict me greatly? What an honour! what happiness! I am then following Jesus! Am I despised, abandoned by men? My Jesus, I hear Thee cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" (*S. Mark xv.*). I hear Thee say: Those whom I love I chastise.

What an honour, what happiness ! I am, then, beloved by Jesus. I am one of His intimate friends.

III. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (*S. Matth. v.*). And because these are the words of our Saviour, all our mourning is turned into joy. "For it is a faithful saying," says S. Paul, "that if we be dead with him, we shall live also with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (*2 Tim. ii.*). My Jesus, when I behold Thee crucified, and crucified for my sins, can I desire any other thing but to be crucified with Thee ? And we, indeed, O our Lord, justly suffer; and how richly Thou rewardest our suffering with Thy pardon and the assurance of Thy kingdom. Lord, remember me !

IV. The way of salvation must always be the way of the Cross. The way of Love is always the way of the Cross. S. Paul was determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. He says: Be not conformed to this world. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. And Jesus Himself has said: In the world you shall have tribulations, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. S. Paul "gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ might dwell in him, for power," he says, "is made perfect in infirmity. For we also are weak in him: but we shall live with him by the power of God" (*2 Cor. xii., xiii.*).

V. "In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, by much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in

stripes, in prisons, in seditions, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned. In the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armour of justice on the right hand and on the left. By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers and yet true: as unknown and yet known. As dying and behold we live: as chastised and not killed. As sorrowful yet always rejoicing: as needy, yet enriching many: as having nothing, and possessing all things" (*2 Cor. vi. 4-10*).

VI. Most dear and sweet Jesus, how few lovers are there of Thy Holy Cross. We must love Thee for Thyself alone, and not on account of the joy in serving Thee; and if Thou withhold Thy consolations from us, help us, dear Saviour, to exclaim with S. Andrew: "O sweet Cross! so long desired and now ready for this soul that so ardently desires thee!" We will consider Thee, Lord Jesus, our great example: "Christ did not please himself" (*Rom. i.*). Thou didst sacrifice all for us: Thy repose, Thy life, Thy will. Thou didst suffer, even to the death of the Cross, even to abandonment by Thy Father! Jesus, give us the spirit of sacrifice, which shall make us to *understand* the cry of S. Teresa: "To suffer or to die!"

VII. "Why, then, art thou afraid to take up thy cross, which leadeth to the kingdom? In the Cross is salvation; in the Cross is life; in the Cross is protection from enemies. In the Cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness; in the Cross is strength of mind; in the Cross is joy of

spirit. In the Cross is height of virtue; in the Cross is perfection of sanctity. There is no health of soul, nor hope of eternal life, but in the Cross. Take up, therefore, thy cross, and follow Jesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before thee, carrying His Cross; and He died for thee upon the Cross, that thou mayest also bear thy cross, and love to die on the Cross" (*Imitation*, bk. ii., chap. xii.).

XXXVII

THE UNITY OF LOVE

I. "I THEREFORE beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called. With all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity. Careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. . . . Until we all meet in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ: That henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men. . . . But doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in him, who is the head, even Christ" (*Eph.* iv.).

II. "Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners: but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God. Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief

corner-stone: In whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up unto a holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are built together into a habitation of God in the Spirit" (*Eph.* ii.).

"But above all these things have charity, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts, wherein also you are called in one body: and be ye thankful" (*Col.* iii.).

III. "You were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the conversation of Israel, and strangers to the testament, having no hope of the promise, and without God in this world. But now in Christ Jesus, you, who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, making void the law of commandments contained in decrees: that he might make the two in himself into one new man, making peace. And might reconcile both to God in one body by the Cross, killing the enmities in himself. And coming he preached peace to you that were afar off, and peace to them that were nigh. For by him we have access both in one Spirit to the Father" (*Eph.* ii.).

IV. In order to know God, we must know our own soul. The soul is a reality and substance, as God is a Reality and a Substance. We know our own soul by recollecting and entering into ourself, by union. Peace and happiness is to be found in union, not in distraction and dissipation. When the soul, recollected within herself, seeks God, this is prayer. In the centre of our soul we find sadness; this is the desire for God. How can we attain this

union? With the intellect we may apprehend and as it were take God, select God, seize God, so that God becomes our thought, not what we think about, but our substantial thought. This is the Beatific Vision. With the will we desire, fly to, attach and unite ourself to God, so that God becomes our will; this is heaven.

V. This union with God is not an accidental union, as of two ingredients, wine and water, which still remain two. It is something more. It has been compared to the union of the soul and body, the soul symbolizing God, the body our soul. All Christians may aspire to this union; certain Doctors have said all must aspire to it. It is the end of man, the cause of his creation. It is the only thing which explains, and makes this life supportable. How are we to dispose our souls for this union? Not by multiplying acts of piety, or by making hopeless efforts to keep our attention fixed perpetually upon God. If my attention wanders from God, it is because I do not love Him as much as He desires me to love Him. Union consists in nothing else but love of God.

VI. To love God is to *will* God. Nothing in itself can be more simple or easy than this act, to will, or to strongly desire anything. It should be the breath of the soul, as respiration is the breath of the body. Breathing is easy, unconscious and simple; disease alone makes it difficult. So to love and will God becomes difficult to us only because we are complicated. It is because we are complicated that union is not easy. Our Lord would never have told us to pray always, if prayer were not easy. What

can be easier than to talk to a friend? Yet this is in reality difficult, for we can seldom find adequate words, nor can we be certain of the patience, wisdom, or affection of our friend. But God is always ready to hear us, never weary of us, understanding us perfectly, loving us perfectly. Even words are unnecessary; a glance, a thought, an elevation of the soul, repose in His presence, this is prayer.

VII. How are we to will what God wills? How know His will? God's will manifests itself to us chiefly in four ways: In precept, namely in His commandments; in necessity, that is the events of life independent of ourselves, such as misfortunes, losses, changes, etc.; in our aspirations, our wishes, impulses, talents. And fourthly, in repose, sickness, fatigue, sleep. We are never too weak to love God, or to will God. It is an error to think that when we are sick, or sleeping, we cannot serve God. God has no need of our actions. To do the will of God, we must seek it in the present moment; in the thing that is to be done immediately, and in the best way, because it is for God. A simple life is what He wills for us, lived for His love.

XXXVIII

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF LOVE

I. "LORD, Thou art in all places of the world," says S. Augustine, "and there is no place where Thou art not in Thine entirety. Thou art in every place, not in such

a manner whereby Thou mayest be discerned by the material senses, but that Thou mayest strike upon the spiritual senses of my soul. Thou art present to all creatures, although in no wise present to the thought of the wicked; but if they be far from Thee, Thou art not far from them; for if Thou be not present to them by the light of Thy grace, Thou art present by the terrors of Thy justice.

II. "Thou art in all spirits: yet ours have so much trouble to discover and to find Thee! We endeavour, so to speak, to follow and to apprehend Thee by our thoughts and our affections, and although Thou art within us, and that in an immutable manner, nevertheless we are unable to attain to Thee or to comprehend Thee."

God is Emanuel, God with us. It is sufficient to make an act of love, to *will* God, and He is already within us. Jesus said: "We will come into him, and make our abode with him."

III. "Lord, Thou hast proved me and known me: thou hast known my sitting down, and my rising up. Thou hast understood my thoughts afar off: my path and my line thou hast searched out. And thou hast foreseen all my ways: for there is no speech in my tongue. Behold, O Lord, thou hast known all things, the last, and those of old: thou hast formed me, and hast laid thy hand upon me. Thy knowledge is become wonderful to me: it is high, and I cannot reach to it. Prove me, O God, and know my heart: examine me and know my paths. And see if there be in me the way of iniquity, and lead me in the eternal way" (*Ps. cxxxviii. 1-6*).

IV. "Thou possessest all that Thou hast created, Thou art master of all Thy works, Thou penetratest them by Thy simplicity, Thou embracest them by Thy love, Thou surpassest them by Thine immensity, Thou upholdest them by Thy power. Lord, who instructest the hearts of Thy faithful by the wisdom of Thy Word, who hast need neither of syllables nor the sound of the voice to make Thyself understood, who art subject neither to change of place nor of time, nor to the ebb and flow of an infinity of contrary thoughts and wills, Lord, who inhabitest the inaccessible light of Thy truth and of Thy wisdom, which no man has seen nor can see as it is; Thou dwellest within Thyself in a peace which cannot be disturbed, although at the same time, Thou in a fashion goest forth from Thyself to embrace the whole universe by the tender care of Thy providence, and to fill it with the gifts of Thy bounty.

V. "Lord, Thou art in Thy creatures without division and without part; for as Thou art in verity one God, Thou art indivisible; Thou sustaineſt them, Thou filleſt them, Thou adornest them, Thou possesseſt them indi-
viſibly, in all Thine entirety, through all their entirety. Lord, Thou filleſt all places, without being Thyself enclosed; Thou upholdest all the universe with a single one of Thy fingers without labour and without fatigue. Thou art everywhere present, without situation and without movement.

VI. "I cry to Thee, O God of bounty and of mercy, I call upon Thee with my soul. The

desires with which Thou inspirlest her, prepare her to receive Thee, and give her as much capacity for comprehending Thee as she is capable of in this life. Enter, then, Lord, enter into and possess all her powers; take possession of them, render Thyself master thereof; and imprint Thy divine likeness as a seal upon all her features.

VII. "I pray Thee, O my God, do not refuse me this grace, since it is Thou who hast inspired me with the thought and desire to ask it of Thee, who hast struck my soul by Thy voice before she raised to Thee her voice and her sighs, and who hast sought and pursued her by Thy grace in order that she should seek and pursue Thee Thyself, and that in seeking Thee she should find Thee, and that in finding Thee she should embrace Thee with all the extent and all the ardour of her love" (*S. Augustine*).

XXXIX

THE OMNISCIENCE OF LOVE

I. "O MY God," exclaims S. Augustine, "what joy would be mine, if I could ever preserve the remembrance of Thy graces, if I could make them the subject of my constant thought, and render Thee each instant the praise and thanks that I owe to Thee therefor; if I could love with all the extent and all the ardour of my heart, with all the forces and faculties of my soul! What joy would be mine,

what sweetness should I find in this perpetual memory of Thy benefits ! But my soul is not capable in herself of these great efforts; Thou knowest, my God, her weakness and her languors."

II. " If my heart sometimes raises the flames of its love unto Thee, it falls immediately again into its natural infirmity; and, a moment later, scarcely may one find, so to speak, the ashes and the vestiges of so great a conflagration. This fearful dastardliness of our hearts, this sudden revolution of our love, cannot be hidden from Thine eyes; they are infinitely more luminous than the sun; they send their light into the most obscure consciences and into the most profound abysses of the human heart. As Thou preservest the entire universe by Thy wisdom, as Thou fillest it with Thine immensity, as Thou lovest by Thy bounty all that Thou hast created, and embracest all Thy creatures by the cares of Thy providence, even so hast Thou always Thine eyes upon our steps and upon all the ways in which we move.

III. " Thine attention extends itself to all created beings; for, as the immutable light of Thine eyes is not so powerful but that it can dwell upon one single object, so likewise it cannot lessen nor weaken by dwelling upon the almost infinite diversity of Thy creatures; Thou considerest all in general and in particular with an equal vivacity and force. . . . Thus it is that Thou dost watch over me, and that Thou regardest me as if I were the sole object of Thy care, and as if Thou hadst willed to withdraw Thy providence from the world, in order to

employ it entirely in guarding and in conducting me alone.

IV. "The light of Thy truth does not cease for one moment to be present to me; it is continually exposed to my interior eyes, and ever ready to enlighten them when I open them and upraise them to Thee. In whatever place I go, I find Thee always to protect me when I invoke Thee" (*S. Augustine*).

It has been said that sometimes the best way to express our sentiments to God, is not to express them; but to rest quietly and simply before Him, in the spirit of Quiet. To consider Him, to regard Him, to make a void within ourselves and drive all other considerations out of ourselves, that God may fully enter into us.

V. "For the spirit of wisdom is benevolent, and will acquit the evil speaker from his lips: for God is witness of his reins: and he is a true searcher of his heart and a hearer of his tongue. For the Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world: and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice. Therefore he that speaketh unjust things cannot be hid, neither shall the chastening judgment pass him by. For inquisition shall be made into the thoughts of the ungodly: and the hearing of his words shall come to God, to the chastening of his iniquities. For the ear of jealousy heareth all things, and the tumult of murmuring shall not be hid. . . . Seek not death in the error of your life. . . . For God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living. For he created all things that they might be" (*Wisdom i.*)

VI. Jesus said: "For raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the grass of the field, which is to-day, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe; how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not solicitous therefore, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things" (*S. Matth.* vi. 28). "Let all them be glad that hope in thee: they shall rejoice for ever, and thou shalt dwell in them" (*Ps. xii.*).

VII. "The Lord is sweet to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. The Lord is faithful in all his words: and holy in all his works. The Lord lifteth up all that fall: and setteth up all that are cast down. The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord: and thou givest them meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and fillest with blessing every living creature. The Lord is nigh to all them that call upon him: to all that call upon him in truth. He will do the will of them that fear him: and he will hear their prayer and save them. The Lord keepeth all them that love him: but all the wicked he will destroy" (*Ps. cxliv.*).

XL

THE IMMENSITY OF LOVE

I. **I** MMENSITY loves me, eternity loves me, charity which surpasses all imagination, loves me. I am beloved of God, whose greatness is infinite, whose wisdom is boundless, whose peace is unutterable. I am beloved by the Light, by the Principle of Life. I am beloved by the Truth. I am beloved by incomparable beauty. I am beloved by the uncreated and incomprehensible God. Shall I return Him only a limited and measured love? I will love Thee, Lord God, my Creator, my Redeemer, my life, my all. I will love Thee for the gift of Thyself. I will love Thee with all my power, with all my desire, with all my will. Help me, my God, so to love Thee!

II. The love of God is all-embracing. Jesus tells us to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that calumniate and persecute us: "That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise on the good, and bad, and raineth upon the just and unjust. Be ye therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect" (*S. Matth. v.*). There is no limit, no measure to the love of God for us. It is the *excess of a God!* It is beyond the feeble comprehension of man to grasp. We can but blindly adore, and love, and imitate.

III. "The Father is incomprehensible, the Son is incomprehensible, the Holy Ghost is incomprehensible" (*Creed of S. Athanasius*). It is in this incomprehensibility, this excess, this immensity of the love of God, that lies the ineffable repose and eternal peace of the creature. We are in the hands of Almighty God. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather together the lambs with his arms, and shall take them up in his bosom, and he himself shall carry them that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and weighed the heavens with his palm. All nations are before him as if they had no being at all, and are counted to him as nothing and vanity" (*Isa. xl.*).

IV. "It is he that sitteth upon the globe of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as locusts: he that stretcheth out the heavens as nothing, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. He that bringeth the searchers of secrets to nothing, that hath made the judges of the earth as vanity. To whom have you likened me, or made me equal, saith the Holy One? Lift up your eyes on high and see who hath created these things: who bringeth out their host by number, and calleth them all by their names: Knowest thou not, hast thou not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, who hath created the ends of the earth: he shall not faint, nor labour, neither is there any searching out of his wisdom" (*Isa. xl.*).

V. "It is he that giveth strength to the weary, and increaseth force and might to them that are not. They that hope in the Lord shall

renew their strength, they shall take strength as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. . . . I the Lord, I am the first and the last. Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and have not cast thee away. Fear not, for I am with thee: turn not aside, for I am thy God: I have strengthened thee, and have helped thee, and the right hand of my just one hath upheld thee. I am the Lord thy God, who take thee by the hand, and say to thee: Fear not, I have helped thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob. . . . I have helped thee, saith the Lord: and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (*Isa. xl.-xli.*).

VI. "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, and called thee by thy name: thou art mine. When thou shalt pass through the waters, I will be with thee and the rivers shall not cover thee: when thou shalt walk in the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. . . . I have loved thee. . . . Fear not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west. . . . I am the Lord: and there is no saviour beside me. . . . And from the beginning I am the same, and there is none that can deliver out of my hand." (*Isa. xlili.*).

VII. O our God, we are nothing, we are nothing. Help us and save us. "I am become as a beast before thee; and I am always with thee. . . . Thou hast held me by my right hand; and by thy will thou hast conducted me, and with glory thou hast received me. For what have I in heaven? and besides thee what do I desire upon earth? For thee my

flesh and my heart hath fainted away; thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever. For behold they that go far from thee shall perish. . . . But it is good for me to adhere to my God, to put my hope in the Lord God " (*Ps. lxxii.*).

XLI

THE OBEDIENCE OF LOVE

I. " **W**E were created for happiness, and we cannot avoid seeking it. If we seek it by the light of the senses, we shall find sensible pleasure and become sensual; if by the light of reason, we shall find the satisfactions of the mind, and like the wise men of paganism become philosophers; but if we desire to be Christians, we must seek our happiness in God, by the light of faith. It is this divine faith which unveils things, not as they appear to the senses and to the intellect, but as God Himself considers and appreciates them. If we keep our vision steadily directed towards this adorable will, we shall love it more and more, and our heart will find no repose but in its accomplishment, repeating with our Saviour: ' My meat is to do the will of my Father ' (*S. John iv. 34*) " (*Dom Sebastian Wyart*).

II. " We that are stronger ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of you please his neighbour unto good, to edification. For Christ did not please himself " (*Rom. xv.*). " Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is

no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. Owe no man anything, but to love one another. The love of our neighbour worketh no evil. Love is the fulfilling of the law" (*Rom.* xiii.). "Be subject one to another in the fear of Christ. And walk in love as Christ also hath loved us and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness" (*Eph.* v.).

III. Jesus Christ was all His life obedient. He came into the world in obedience to His Father's will. He was subject to Joseph and Mary, and to all the exigencies of the laws of men. Throughout His ministry, He yielded continually to the will of others, never refusing anyone who came to Him for succour. He was obedient to the ruling authorities: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" (*S. Luke* xx.). He was obedient to His enemies: "Led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearers, he shall not open his mouth" (*Isa.* liii.). In all things He was obedient, that He might teach us obedience. "Do not think that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (*S. Matth.* v.).

IV. Christ was obedient . . . even to the death of the Cross. O my Jesus, what obedience, what abjection! Jesus, the eternal King of Glory, by His obedience, became as the meanest of the people, and "by the hands of wicked men was crucified and slain" (*Acts* ii.). "There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness. . . . Despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity; and his

look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not. He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows: and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth" (*Isa.* liii.).

V. "The stone which the builders rejected; the same is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing: and it is wonderful in our eyes" (*Ps. cxvii.*). Jesus, my Love and my Saviour, Thy bitter Passion was to teach us obedience. All sin, like the first sin, is a revolt against God and an act of disobedience; and we are born in sin and in disobedience: "I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins" (*Ps. 1.*). And the sacrifice that Thou demandest of me, my Jesus, in expiation of this immense sin, is an infinite obedience. And how can we dare to oppose our will to the will of the Almighty? How can we dare to imitate the devil, who never ceases to repeat: *Non serviam?* No, no, my Jesus: teach me to love, to follow, to obey Thee.

VI. "Follow Me," said our Blessed Lord to all whom He called. Follow Me, learn of Me, imitate Me in all things. "What great matter is it if thou, who art but dust and a mere nothing, submit thyself to man for God's sake, when I, the Almighty and the Most High, who created all things out of nothing, have for thy sake humbly subjected Myself to man? I became the most humble and the most abject of all men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride by My humility. Learn, O dust, to obey;

earth and clay that thou art, learn to humble thyself and to bow down under the feet of all" (*Imitation*, bk. iii., chap. xiii.).

VII. "O Lord, my portion, I have said I would keep thy law. I entreated thy face with all my heart: have mercy on me according to thy word. . . . Teach me goodness and discipline and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments. Before I was humbled, I offended: therefore have I kept thy word. Thou art good: and in thy goodness teach me thy justifications. O how have I loved thy law, O Lord! it is my meditation all the day. How sweet are thy words to my palate! more than honey to my mouth. Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: and teach me thy justifications" (*Ps. cxviii.*).

XLII

THE SUFFICIENCY OF LOVE

I. **O** JESUS, abide with us, abide with us. Everything is passing, changing, dying. The day is far spent, our youth, our strength, our energy abandon us. O Jesus, abide with us, abide with us. We press Thee, we implore Thee, loving Master, to remain—for the night is descending, the glorious light of faith is declining and obscured by the clouds of infidelity and impiety which darkens this earthly pilgrimage. O Jesus, abide with us, abide with us, in Thy Sacraimental Presence,

Scatter this night, enkindle our faith and our love. Give us Thyself; leave us not, but remain with us, and we shall be satisfied.

II. Philip saith to Him: "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus saith . . . Philip, he that seeth me, seeth the Father also. . . . I am in the Father and the Father in me" (*S. John* xiv.). As for me, I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear. Jesus, Eternal Word of the Father, I shall be satisfied—I shall be satisfied, my tender Father, when Thou shonest Thyself to me. And even as I ask it, Thou art here within me lovingly communicating Thyself to me by these ardent desires which Thou givest me to behold Thee and to possess Thee. Yes, my Father, Thou art present within my heart, Thou art pressing me to Thy Sacred Heart. I am satisfied, Lord.

III. "What have I in heaven? and beside thee what do I desire upon earth? For thee my flesh and my heart hath fainted away: thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever" (*Ps. lxxii.*). My God, what can we desire but a joy which shall endure, what can we desire but rest from labour, from desire, and from fear; and what is this eternal joy, this eternal beauty, this eternal rest and peace but Thyself, O my God, Thyself who shall give sleep to Thy beloved (*Ps. cxxvi.*)—the sleep of perfect content in Thee?

IV. My Jesus, I hear Thee saying to me: Fear not, I am thy All. I am sufficient for thee. To the reed, bowed down, Thou sayest: Fear not, I will not break thee; to the smoking

flax: fear not, I will not quench thee; to the poor: Fear nothing, I will be your riches; to those who mourn: I will console you; to them who are burdened and labour: I will refresh you. To the sick Thou sayest: I will heal thee; to the sinner: I will pardon thee. Thou sayest to the wandering sheep: Fear nothing, I will come and seek thee. To the prodigal child Thou sayest: Fear not, but return to Me who am thy Father. My Jesus, is there any need of mine that Thou canst not satisfy? No, my blessed Lord, there is not one.

V. Lord, Thou givest us all things: here, Thy grace, and hereafter Thyself to be our recompence. O my God, who can recount all Thy benefits to the soul who receives Thee? Thou dost protect, defend, instruct, govern, and direct her; Thou dost chastise, and after Thy chastisement, Thou pardonest, restorest, healest and consolest her. Lord, Thou givest all—all grace, all riches, all happiness, all strength. Thou impartest to the soul that receives Thee, Thy light, Thy perfection, Thy holiness, Thyself. Thou sayest to her: "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it" (*Ps. lxxx.*). O Lord, enlarge my heart. Fulfil me with Thy love.

VI. And Thou Thyself hast promised: "Fear not, I am thy protector, and thy exceeding great reward" (*Gen. xv.*). My Jesus, such "knowledge is become wonderful to me: it is high, I cannot reach to it" (*Ps. cxxxviii.*). God Himself will be my exceeding great reward. My Jesus, this blessed promise already transports me into Paradise. So immense is my

expectation and my hope, that henceforth I am blind, insensible and indifferent to all things of time and of sense. Thou, O God, wilt be my exceeding great reward, and already I feel all other desires and affections die within me—for I begin to take my delight in Thee! Jesus, draw me—we will run after Thee (*Cant.* i.).

VII. Yes: when we awake from this troubled dream of life, when we awake from this stupefaction and deadness of soul, when we quit the illusions and the heavy shadows, the intangible burdens and the oceans of afflictions that oppress and blind us here—when we awake, O Jesus, we shall be satisfied, for we shall behold Thee in Thy glory. My eyes “shall see the King, the King in his beauty”; my eyes “shall behold the land that is far off” (*Isa.* xxxiii.). “In my flesh I shall see God” (*Job* xix.). Thou Thyself wilt be my exceeding great reward. Even so, “come, Lord Jesus!” (*Apoc.* xxii.).

XLIII

THE SIMPLICITY OF LOVE

I. “ONE Soul! One Eternity!” Saint Teresa was wont to exclaim. One soul, one eternity! let us also say to ourselves. That is to say: we have but one soul, let us not lose it, or all is lost! We have but one eternity, let us not sacrifice it, or all is sacrificed for ever. Our Saviour had good reason to say: “One thing is necessary!” This one thing is perseverance! Jesus calls us by one word: Come!

He reduces the commandments of God to one word: Love ! All His teaching is simple, child-like, easy. His yoke is truly easy, and He asks nothing of us that is not simple.

II. What can be easier than to go to my Father ? What easier than to desire that which one loves, and what simpler than to seek that which one desires ? What is more natural than to desire the perfection of beauty, and what is more simple than to direct the eyes towards the light ? The way of Love is always easy; for love softens every hardship and sweetens every sorrow. Love simplifies everything; it solves every difficulty; it supplies the motive for each moment that we have to live. It makes the moment of death that happy and glorious goal, ever to be desired, always to be approached with confidence.

III. " As S. Joseph was just, he had always his will adjusted and in perfect conformity with God's will. He was always meek, quiet, and persevering in his submission to God's good pleasure. And God fully appreciated this entire confidence: S. Joseph's life was filled with trials. Always and everywhere he submitted himself to the will of the Creator, and abandoned himself with boundless confidence to the wisdom and paternal goodness of his God. He was never anxious nor troubled; he indulged in no sadness or apprehension, knowing well that such a failing in the soul is an outrage to God, for it is like doubting the goodness and the providence of Him, who is always more attentive to our needs than the tenderest and most careful of mothers " (*S. Francis de Sales*).

IV. "The most excellent of all devotions is to love Jesus Christ, by thinking very often of the love that our tender Redeemer has borne and bears us. It is sad to see devout persons sometimes giving themselves entirely to a multiplicity of lesser devotions, while this great central and simplest of devotions, which should be the principal or unique one of a Christian, is almost neglected. And, after all, nothing but personal love of Jesus will endure to the end and penetrate to the throne of God. A vague love of God, and various devotions to Saints is far from that simple and direct and personal love demanded from us by Jesus Christ" (*Faber*).

V. The love of Jesus: that is the only thing that will carry us through. It is so simple to love Jesus Christ. He had but to look upon His apostles and say to them: Follow Me, and gladly they left all, and attached themselves wholeheartedly to Him till death. It was always love that was the tie between Jesus and His friends: "If you love me, keep my commandments. A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another" (*S. John xiii.*).

VI. How simple it is to suffer! How simple it is to die! How simple it is to say to God: "Thy will be done." It is only our resistance and our revolt against God's will that makes things hard. Difficulties are created by our own complications, by our own want of simplicity. To

the little child all is simple, because the little child allows everything to be done for him. All God asks of us is to allow Him to do for us. He asks us to accept His will without questioning it, without resisting it; and more: to accept it heartily, and with the loving simplicity of little children.

VII. The ideal of simplicity is to be found in the life of the Holy Family at Nazareth. There Jesus lived for thirty years, a model of the highest perfection, and practising for our example all the hidden virtues. There reigned the fragrant virtues of perfect obedience, submission, docility, of patience, of silence, of recollection, of humility, of labour, of poverty, of mutual love and service. There in that blessed home reigned perfect peace and perfect union with God. And it is to this perfection of simplicity that we must go to learn what great simplicity He demands of us, who has given us the command: "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (*S. Matth. v.*).

XLIV

THE ENERGY OF LOVE

I. THE heart touched with divine love is never at rest until it rests, O Lord, in Thee. Once smitten with the love of God, the fire of love begins to consume the soul, never more to cease. For love cannot take repose until it comes to the possession of the beloved. Therefore love seeks and labours that it may find; love supplicates and extols; love is ever

awake and observant in all things to please or procure pleasure for the beloved. Love remembers and is grateful; love does not weary nor languish. Love penetrates and divines. Love only shall endure when all else fails; and Love at length shall attain God.

II. "We shall rest in Paradise. The earth is the field of labour. Let us remember that very soon our body will return to the earth, our soul appear before the Sovereign Judge, and our lot for eternity be fixed. Soon we shall have no more suffering; it will be the time to reign: then let us suffer willingly for a few days, that we may reign for ever with Jesus. The time for seeking God is life; the time to find Him is death; the time to possess Him is eternity. Pleasures pass, but the pains of pleasures are eternal. Tribulations pass, but rewards are eternal. Eternity depends upon death, death depends upon life, life may depend upon a moment, a moment may decide eternity" (*Père de Ravignan*).

III. Work is a condition of man's life here below; and Jesus Christ has sanctified labour by Himself working with His hands, and by choosing for His foster-father Joseph, who was a carpenter. His own life was one of ceaseless labour in the service of others, and He sent forth His disciples to continue His work. All our work must be in His name and done for Him, even as His work was His Father's business. "Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Unless the Lord keep the city, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it" (*Ps. cxxvi.*).

IV. "Charity never falleth away" (*i Cor.* xiii.). Charity never rests nor sleeps nor ceases; but pursues always, labours always, and seeks always. Love runs and flies in the service of God. The life of love is a perpetual combat for the glory of God. It is this continual action of love which makes the Saints—the action of Love which is the action of God Himself. O Love, penetrate, possess, transform in us all the powers of the soul; be our life, our unique life; be all our energy, all our force; be our wings and our aspiration. O Love, be our goal, our Way, and our God !

V. "In all things we suffer tribulation but are not distressed: we are straitened but are not destitute. We suffer persecution, but are not forsaken: we are cast down, but we perish not. Always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies. For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake: that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. . . . For which cause we faint not: but though our outward man is corrupted: yet the inward man is renewed day by day. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal" (*2 Cor.* iv.).

VI. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, do mercifully and be strengthened. Let all your things be done in charity" (*2 Cor.* xvi. 13). We will consider Thee, Lord Jesus, lest we be weary and faint by the way. We will consider

Thee who didst bear such contradictions of sinners against Thee. We will consider Thee, who dost feed with heavenly manna the people who follow Thee into the desert places. Yes, dear Lord, Thou didst have compassion on the multitude who were without food, and Thou wouldest not send them from Thee fasting. Renew then our strength, by giving us Thyself. Feed us, Lord, here, with bread in the desert !

VII. "That which you have hold fast till I come. He that shall overcome, and keep my works unto the end, I will give him power over the nations. . . . As I also have received of my Father: I will give him the morning star. . . . Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die. For I find not thy works full before my God. Have in mind therefore in what manner thou hast received and heard: and observe, and do penance. Such as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore and do penance. . . . To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne: as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father, in his throne" (*Apoc.* iii.).

XLV

THE BENEFICENCE OF LOVE

I. "HOW loving is our God ! Again, as Christ, how loving is He ! The Christ is Christ by love, and He is all love. His work before all things is to testify to love, to reveal it to men, and to convince them that

they are the objects of it, to let it dominate in them and inspire their life and furnish the rule of their conduct. From the first instant of His existence to the supreme moment of His death, Jesus did nothing else but love, but show us His love, in a thousand ways. When He speaks, it is love that speaks; when He works miracles, it is love that acts; when He suffers, it is love that suffers; His doctrine is love, His law is love; His grace is love in action; His sacraments, and particularly the Eucharist, are institutions of love, universalized and bestowed. It is because He utters and bestows love wherever He goes, that Jesus Christ *went about doing good*" (*Mgr. Gay*).

II. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as most dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness. . . . For you were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk ye as children of the light: for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice and truth. Providing what is well pleasing to God" (*Eph.* v.). "As the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart, with a good will serving, as to the Lord and not to men. Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man shall do, the same shall he receive from the Lord" (*Eph.* vi.).

III. "Thou hast mercy upon all, because thou canst do all things, and overlookest the sins of men for the sake of repentance. For thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made: for thou

didst not appoint or make anything hating it. And how could anything endure, if thou wouldest not? or be preserved, if not called by thee? But thou sparest all: because they are thine, O Lord, who lovest souls" (*Wisdom xi.* 24-27). "Do good, be rich in good works, give easily, communicate to others" (*I Tim. vi.* 18).

IV. One of the most magnificent attributes of His life, at once divine and human, was that atmosphere of goodness and mercy which seemed to radiate from the Saviour. He did not come to those who are in good health, but to heal the sick; He did not come to visit the just, but sinners. His delight was to be with the children of men who had need of His love. Upon the Cross, He forgot His crown of thorns, the anguish of the nails, and the mockery of His enemies, that He might gain another victory by His mercy, in promising Paradise to the penitent thief. He takes such delight in mercy that He invites the angels of heaven to rejoice with Him, when He carries back on His shoulders one sheep that had strayed from the heavenly fold.

V. When the disciples came and told Jesus all things that they had done, His first thought was one of tender care for their repose and refreshment. "Come apart," He said, "into a desert place, and rest a little" (*S. Mark vi.*); and they went into a ship, and into a desert place apart, and up into a mountain, and there Jesus sat with His children, alone, and ministered to their refreshment, with loaves and fishes. O Jesus, what a blessed retreat with Thee, alone; what blessed refreshment, O Jesus,

administered by Thee ! O good and dear Master, take us, too, apart, where we may tell Thee all things; feed us, good Master, and refresh us, and remain in our midst.

VI. But great multitudes of people, seeing Jesus and His disciples going away, followed Him, and on the other side of the lake they found Him again reposing alone with His friends. And when the Master saw them, He received them with great compassion and love, because they were as sheep without a shepherd, and He began to teach them many things, so that they forgot their fatigue and their hunger in that desert place in the charm of listening to Him, until the day was far spent. Ah ! good Master, always so unmindful of Thy own weariness, always so compassionate and loving, ever teaching us the many gracious lessons that Thou hast for us. . . . O Jesus, Thou art always giving ! Give us only hearts inclined to receive !

VII. And when the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him, saying: "This is a desert place, and the hour is now past; send them away, that they may buy themselves meat to eat. And he answering said to them: Give you them to eat" (*S. Mark vi.*). No, my Jesus, Thou wouldest not permit that these sheep that came to Thee, should be sent away fasting. Thou wilt not that we go to buy meat for ourselves, Jesus, but Thou desirest Thyself to give us bread, which Thou dost take, and bless, and distribute, with Thine own venerable and adorable hands. Jesus, evermore, in Thy bounty, give us this bread. Feed us Thyself, and with Thyself, O Lord.

XLVI

THE ABANDONMENT OF LOVE

I. "LET this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But debased himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit formed as a man. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. For which cause God also hath exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name" (*Phil. ii. 5, 10*). Jesus has abandoned Himself to us, taking the form of a servant, taking the form of a sinner, taking the form of bread.

II. Jesus is a jealous God. He has loved us with excess, to the last drop of His blood, to the folly of the Cross. He asks excess of love from us, the abandonment to Him of our hearts, with no hesitations, no reservations, to the last drop of our blood, to the folly of the Cross. We must be all for Him, without prevarication, or regret. It is the *one thing necessary*, to leave all that we may find all, to lose all that we gain all. Does this seem hard? Will ye also go away? Lord, to whom should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

III. Our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world for no other purpose than to teach us wherein consists true and absolute abandon-

ment. His entire life was one of simple and absolute devotion in the service of His Father. "I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me" (*S. John vi.*). "The Son cannot do anything of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing" (*S. John v.*). "Father, glorify thy name" (*S. John xii.*). His passion is for His Father's glory. He teaches us to pray: "Father: hallowed be thy name!" (*S. Matth. vi.*).

IV. Let us a hundred, yes, a thousand times a day, enter into the inner sanctuary of our soul, where our God has taken up His abode, and say: "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Our Lord made Peter repeat these words again and again. Let us, then, on all occasions and at all moments and in the very exuberance of our love declare it to Him. When words fail us, let us rest in the thought: Lord, Thou knowest all things: our desires, our intentions, our impotence, our misery. Thou knowest that I love Thee. Lord, Thou knowest that the heart of man is an abyss. Fill this abyss with Thy love.

V. It was in his abandonment of love that S. Paul said: "I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me" (*Gal. ii.*). When a soul is wholly abandoned to God, she is no more herself; she is but the subject of God's good pleasure; the victim of His love; ready for all destructions in herself of all that does not please Him. She is God's instrument, passive in His hand for any work to which He shall see it fit to appoint her. She is indifferent to all the pains and joys of life as such, caring only to be clothed upon

with the will of God, aspiring only to know as she is known.

VI. "Refuse nothing, reckon upon nothing; accept all from the hands of Love, and do all for love. We are saved by hope; and Jesus Christ, who is the goal, is also the Way. Let us lean upon Him, let us follow Him, and He will conduct us to the Father" (*Mgr. Gay*). The union of the soul with God in this world is accomplished by the union of our will with His, and that by the transformation of our will into His will. Jesus has loved us to the excess of the Cross, to the excess of the Eucharist. I will love Him to the excess of becoming nothing.

VII. "O mystery of the Redemption ! Jesus removing the mountain of our iniquities ! Jesus crushed beneath the weight of our sins ! Jesus breaking down by His obedience the barrier of our revolts and ingratitudes ! Jesus opening to us the road to heaven, by the Cross ! O superabundant redemption of my God ! Life is not life ! It is but the road that leads to eternal life. It is the rapid vehicle that conducts me into the presence of Jesus Christ ; death opens for me that heaven where I shall go to cast myself for ever into the ocean of love of the Heart of Jesus Christ—the heaven where I shall behold and follow, wherever He goeth, the Lamb slain from the beginning : Jesus Christ. O sublime Hope !" (*Canon Schorderet*).

XLVII

THE GAZE OF LOVE

I. "LOOK upon thy servants and upon their works: and direct their children. And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us: and direct thou the work of our hands over us; yea, the work of our hands do thou direct" (*Ps. lxxxix. 16, 17*). "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? or he that formed the eye, doth he not consider? He that chastiseth nations, shall he not rebuke: he that teacheth men knowledge? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vain. Blessed is the man, whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord; and shalt teach him out of thy law" (*Ps. xciii. 9-12*). "With expectation I have waited for the Lord, and he was attentive to me. And he heard my prayers and brought me out of the pit of misery. And he set my feet upon a rock, and directed my steps" (*Ps. xxxix.*).

II. "I will give thee understanding, and I will instruct thee in this way in which thou shalt go: I will fix my eyes upon thee. Do not become like the horse or the mule, who have no understanding. . . . Many are the scourges of the sinner, but mercy shall encompass him that hopeth in the Lord" (*Ps. xxxi. 8-10*).

And the Lord, turning, looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord. . . . And Peter, going out, wept bitterly.

O adorable look of the Master; look to

provoke tears of repentance, transports of love, fidelity to death. O adorable look, may we remember that thou art ever fixed upon our inconstant hearts.

III. There is nothing enigmatical in our life to the eyes of God our Creator. In all the mysteries and tangled ways of our troubled existence, His gaze ever follows us with indefatigable tenderness and solicitude. All our external agitations, our mental evolutions, the flights of our imagination, the tumult of our passions, our deliberated intentions, the impulses of our heart; all these weary Him not, but are clear and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. He understands our thoughts afar off. May we not, indeed, abandon ourselves with full confidence into the heart of such wisdom and such love !

IV. "The Lord hath looked from heaven: he hath beheld all the sons of men. From his habitation which he hath prepared he hath looked upon all that dwell on the earth. He who hath made the hearts of every one of them: who understandeth all their works. Behold the eyes of the Lord are on them that fear him: and on them that hope in his mercy. To deliver their souls from death, and feed them in famine. Our soul waiteth for the Lord: for he is our helper and protector. For in him our heart shall rejoice: and in his holy name we have trusted. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have hoped in thee" (Ps. xxxii.).

V. Our Lord tells us when we are praying to speak little, for: "Your Father who seeth in

secret knoweth what is needful for you before you ask him." He says: "Enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee." And what is this secret chamber into which Thou seest, O my God, but my heart, and why dost Thou impose silence therein, my Father, but that Thou mayest speak to me in that secrecy and silence whereinto Thy gaze of love doth ever penetrate, and there abide.

VI. The Christian soul, detached from the world, has but one single desire, for time and for eternity: to meet the adorable gaze of Jesus, to be united to Him by that ineffable union which is so exquisitely portrayed to us in the Canticle of the mystery of divine love: "My beloved to me, and I to him, who feedeth among the lilies. Till the day break, and the shadows retire." Let us enter, let us enter within ourselves; let us prepare for the heavenly Spouse a place of abode worthy of Him, and He will surely come and He will repose there; for His delights are to dwell within the heart that calls Him.

VII. To be alone with Jesus, and with Jesus only; to be all for Jesus and for none other, to be for Him "a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up," this is what He would have of us. Thou hast wounded my heart, my Jesus, my Beloved, "Thou hast wounded my heart with Thy looks of love. Let my Beloved come into his garden. . . . I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse, I have gathered my myrrh with my aromatical spices. I have

eaten the honeycomb with my honey. I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends, and drink, and be inebriated, my dearly beloved. I sleep and my heart watcheth: the voice of my beloved knocking: Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled" (*Cant.* iii., iv.).

XLVIII

THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

I. "BLESS the Lord, O my soul: O my God, thou art exceedingly great. Thou hast put on praise and beauty: and art clothed with light as with a garment" (*Ps. ciii.*). " My heart hath said to thee: my face hath sought thee: thy face, O Lord, will I still seek. Turn not away thy face from me" (*Ps. xxvi.*). " The Church, divinely inspired, gives the glorious name of the Cross to all the shadows and sorrows of life. So let us love our crosses; they come to us from the hand of God all enriched with the precious gems of His tenderness. Each time we complain of them, it is as if we were to pluck a diamond from our cross and cast it away! But the Cross itself remains always priceless, precious, and beautiful in the sight of God" (*P. Lefebvre, S.J.*).

II. " The life of the Saints! It is the living Gospel, Christianity in action; it is the Poem of Christ, the glory of the Church. After the Eucharist and Holy Scriptures, there is nothing that can so surely and promptly form that supernatural temperament in souls, which is the foundation of all sanctity. Sanctity is con-

tagious; the life of the saints is the atmosphere which carries this influence to us along the ages. Nothing is more enlightening, more apt to detach us from the earth or to enkindle good desires, or to inflame us with generous enthusiasm for the things of God, or to fill us with a sincere humility and an overwhelming confidence in God, than the taking to our hearts this Poem of the Beauty of Holiness!" (*Mgr. Gay*).

III. "One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. That I may see the delight of the Lord, and visit his temple. For he hath hidden me in his tabernacle: in the day of evils, he hath protected me in the secret place of his tabernacle" (*Ps. xxvi. 4, 5*). "The God of gods, the Lord hath spoken; and he hath called the earth. From the rising of the sun, to the going down thereof: out of Sion the loveliness of his beauty. God shall come manifestly: our God shall come, and shall not keep silence" (*Ps. xlix. 1-3*).

IV. S. Paul says that no man can even utter the name of Jesus but by the Holy Ghost; that is to say, that no one can pronounce the Holy Name with merit if he be not in a state of grace. And, uttered with devotion, does not the Name, Jesus, express our all? Jesus—Saviour! for He shall save His people from their sins. Thy Name is as ointment poured forth! Jesus! my God and my all! Jesus! my Lord and my God! Jesus, my Love! Jesus, my life! Jesus, my light! My Jesus, mercy! Jesus, Son of David, have mercy upon me!

V. S. Paul had such a love for the adorable Name of Jesus, that it was perpetually on his lips; he repeats it continually; it adorns every page of his epistles. He cannot resist for ever uttering it. He makes it his apostleship to do nothing, to name nothing, to be nothing, but in this adorable name. From that moment, when struck to the earth by a great light from heaven, and hearing himself called by name: "Saul!" He answers: "Who art thou, Lord?" And the Lord replies: "I am Jesus!" From that moment he is wholly possessed by Jesus. The world ceases for him, and Jesus lives. "Lord," he says, "what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said to him: Arise. . ." Henceforth he is at the command of Jesus—all for Jesus. For, he had seen the Lord in the way, and he had spoken with Him (*Acts ix.*).

VI. It is a Name above every name, Name at once so adorable and so redoubtable that the heart vibrates and trembles at its sound. No name has ever, than that of Jesus, provoked greater passion of love, or greater frenzy of hatred. To truly love it is to attain all sanctity; to hate it is condemnation. "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema" (*1 Cor. xvi. 22*). Irresistible and beautiful Name of Jesus, all powerful Name with our Father in heaven. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name that will I do" (*S. John xvi.*). "But no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Spirit."

VII. "All whatsoever you do in word or in work, all things do ye in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Col. iii. 17*). "They that love

his name shall dwell therein" (*Ps. lxviii. 37*). "Let his name be blessed for evermore; his name continueth before the sun. Blessed be the name of his majesty for ever," (*Ps. lxxi. 17, 18, 19*) "and the whole earth shall be filled with his majesty. So be it, so be it!"

How God's friends of the ancient law loved to praise and extol His Holy Name. Solomon says: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the just runneth to it and shall be exalted." (*Prov. xviii. 10*). "Thy name is as oil poured out: therefore the young maidens have loved thee" (*Cant. i. 2*).

XLIX

THE GIFT OF GOD

I. JESUS said: "If thou didst know the Gift of God, and who is he that saith to thee, give me to drink; thou perhaps wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (*S. John iv.*). Enlighten, O Lord, our ignorance, that we may know Thee in Thy daily visitations, that we may correspond with Thy grace in all things, and continually ask of Thee the living water. Lord, may we know Thee in every circumstance and in every moment of our life, in every necessity and aspiration of our entire being, O Light of the world, Lord Jesus, the Gift of God!

II. "When he drew near, seeing the city, he wept over it, saying: If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to

thy peace: but now they are hidden from thy eyes" (*S. Luke* xix. 41). Oh! tears of my Jesus! Oh! yearnings of the Heart of my Jesus! over the hardness and the blindness of the hearts that would not turn to Thee. Oh! Jesus, Jesus, open our eyes, that we may know the Gift of God in the midst of us, that we may know Thee. Give to our eyes rivers of tears, that we may console Thee, most loving Lord, for those tears of Thine and for that yearning of Thine over the hardness of men's hearts.

III. How sorely man's blindness and hardness of heart grieved the most loving Heart of the Saviour! And " sighing deeply in spirit, he saith: Why doth this generation ask a sign? And he left them" (*S. Mark* viii.). He had offered them the Gift of God, they had refused it. And Jesus is profoundly sad. Then His disciples began to reason among themselves, not understanding what He had said to them. And Jesus, reading their thoughts, said to them: "Why do you think within yourselves, for that you have no bread? Do you not yet know or understand?" (*S. Matth.* xvi.). The disciples were not yet become as little children, with the absolute confidence in their Master that they were soon to have.

IV. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children as the bird doth her brood under her wings, and thou wouldest not?" (*S. Luke* xiii.). "If thou hadst known. . . If thou knewst the Gift of God!" (*S. John* iv.). O most pathetic words of the Gospel! And the tears of Jesus! His pro-

ound emotion ! His deep sighings ! And this is a God, pleading with His creatures, knocking at the door of the heart of His creatures, proffering them this wonderful Gift of Himself, entreating them to accept of Him life and eternal beatitude. Is it possible, O Lord, that any can resist Thee ? that any can refuse such a Gift ?

V. Everything in time is but a preparation. In eternity all is consummation. Thus, to all men, even to the holiest, Jesus Christ may say now: *If thou knewest the Gift of God ! If thou knewest but the extent, the immensity, the infinity, the rapture, the excess of that Gift ! If thou knewest the greatness of thy opportunities ! If thou knewest the greatness of thy soul ! If thou knewest the greatness of My love !* This Gift of God is the supreme Gift, it is the triumph of God, who is love, who has created us by love, who by love became incarnate, and redeemed us by love, and finally, who gives Himself entirely to us in the Eucharist, by a prodigy of love !

VI. " He was angry. . . . His father therefore began to entreat him . . . : Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine " (S. Luke xv.). My most loving Father, can it be that Thou dost *entreat* me to remain with Thee, when I am so ungrateful as to forget for one moment Thy goodness ? If by Thy great grace I have not separated myself from Thee by grievous sin, O grant that I may never forget that Thou art ever with me, and I always with Thee, most munificent, most loving, most tender Father. And all that Thou hast

is mine ! O munificence of my God ! All that Thou hast ! Thy grace, Thy love, Thy very self ! all ! all ! And I have dared to complain to Thee, to feel abandoned by Thee ! My Jesus, mercy !

VII. Open our eyes, O God, enlighten our ignorance, enlarge our heart, that we may know the Gift of God. My God, "I studied that I might know this thing, it is a labour in my sight. Until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand. . . . I am as a beast before thee: and I am always with thee. Thou hast held me by my right hand: and by thy will thou hast conducted me. . . ." (*Ps. lxxii.*). "If any man love me . . . my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him" (*S. John xiv.*). What an ineffable Gift: a God who delights to be with us ! What delight, to be for ever thus in the society of God Himself ! He is in the centre of our hearts. He declares to us: "I know mine, and mine know me" (*S. John x.*). We shall never more be alone, for we know Thee, Lord; yes, we know Thee, since Thou sayest it Thyself. True, it is in the darkness of faith, in the darkness of our ignorance and our poverty; but we know Thee, dear Jesus, who knowest us perfectly, who art all our hope and all our life.

L

THE SECRET OF HIS FACE

I. "JESUS hides Himself for us in a little Host; let us hide ourselves for Him in humility.

Let us offer our crosses to God, but hide them from the eyes of men. Let us suffer alone with God, giving to Him the virginity of our desolation, complaining to Him alone of our troubles. This is the heroism of sanctity" (*Ven. P. Eymard*). "Behold, thou hast loved truth: the uncertain and hidden things of thy wisdom thou hast made manifest to me" (*Ps. 1. 8*). The Father sees in secret; He speaks in silence. He reveals Himself to us in solitude. God is the Great Solitary. He asks of us solitude, silence, emptiness, expectation, before He can come to us.

II. "Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing broader, nothing more delicious, nothing more satisfying or perfect in heaven or in earth: for love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, above all created things. The lover flieth, runneth, rejoiceth; he is free and cannot be restrained. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all; because he resteth in one sovereign good above all, from which all good floweth and proceedeth. Love watcheth, and sleeping slumbereth not. . . . A loud cry in the ears of God is that ardent affection of the soul which saith, O my God, my Love, Thou art all mine and I am all Thine" (*Imitation of Jesus Christ*, bk. iii., chap. v.).

III. "Therefore will I allure her, and will lead her into the wilderness: and I will speak to her heart . . . and she shall sing there according to the days of her youth, and according to her coming out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be in that day, saith the Lord, that she shall call me: My husband. . . . And I will espouse thee to me for ever: and I will espouse thee to me in justice, and judgment, and in mercy, and in commiserations, and I will espouse thee to me in faith: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord" (*Osee ii.*).

IV. "I sleep, but my heart watcheth." And sleeping, Lord, Thou slumberest not. Thou didst seem to sleep, our Saviour, in the Bosom of the Father for long ages before being born into the World. Thou didst seem to sleep, little helpless Infant in the crib, whilst Thou wast the Word made Flesh, come to Thine own. Thou didst seem to sleep in Thy hidden life at Nazareth, the while Thou wast teaching us how to walk before Thee and be perfect. Thou didst sleep, Lord Jesus, upon the waters of Nazareth, the while Thou didst hold the elements in Thy hand. Thou didst seem to sleep, dear Saviour, in Thy Crucifixion, in Thy precious death and burial, the while Thou wast vanquishing death and ransoming our souls. How profoundly dost Thou seem to sleep in the Tabernacle, whilst there Thou art the same Jesus, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, our life, our providence, our unique hope ! Yes, Jesus: Thy Heart watcheth !

V. "I will lead her into the wilderness." Must it be in the wilderness that Thou wilt

speak to my heart, O Lord, and what is this wilderness? Surely it is a region where there shall be a great emptiness, a great void, and a great aridity. And into this abyss of nothingness Thou, O Lord, wilt encounter no obstacle to Thy entrance, no sound of the world or of self to drown Thy voice. Lord, bring me quickly into this blessed wilderness, into the absence of all loves but Thy love, the absence of all desire but for Thee. And come, Lord Jesus, and fill my heart with the fire of Thy love.

VI. "I have run the way of thy commandments when thou dost enlarge my heart" (*Ps. cix. 32*). O Lord, enlarge my heart, enlarge it, beyond the trivialities of this world and the miseries of this life. Enlarge my heart, Lord Jesus, to receive the immense treasures of Thy love and the immeasurable gifts of Thy grace. Enlarge my heart, that I may perceive the depths of my misery and my unworthiness. And again enlarge my heart, and fill it entirely with the sweetness of Thy Spirit. Thou speakest always to me, Lord; O, create in me an immense silence, that I may always be attentive to this ineffable and mysterious speech. Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth!

VII. "The *influence of Jesus*, sanctifying in this world, beatifying in eternity, this is my supernatural element. As the world which surrounds me, the air which I breathe, the light which lightens me, are the natural elements of my life, so the supernatural element, the living and divine element, the living atmosphere of my being is Thyselv, O Jesus, who hast said:

‘ I am the Life !’’ Thou art our all-embracing light, full of love and delight. Even in Thy Sacred Humanity, Thou art a divine, living, and life-giving Sun. And, crowning wonder ! Thou hast provided a nourishment for Thy supernatural life. And this food, what is it ? It is nothing else but Thyself, O Jesus Christ, nothing else but Thy Body, Thy Blood, Thy Soul, Thy Divinity !’’ (*Canon Sauvé*).

LI

THE SWEET GUEST OF THE SOUL

I. *DULCIS Hospes Animæ*, Sweet Guest of the Soul. Come, Lord Jesus, to be my Guest, Thou who art the Key of David, Thou who openest and no man shutteth, Thou who standest at the gate and knockest, open, open the door of my heart. “ Take my heart, for I cannot give it to Thee; keep it, for I cannot keep it for Thee ” (*S. Augustine*). Give me strength and grace to respond to Thy words: “ If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” Come, O come, Lord Jesus. Lay Thy right hand upon me, saying: Fear not (*Apoc. i.*). But come, Lord Jesus, who hast said Thou wilt come quickly (*Apoc. xxii.*). “ Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day: and the same for ever ” (*Heb. xiii.*). Come quickly, and take possession of my heart.

II. Let us imitate the admirable eagerness of Zacheus to see Jesus. He was humble, though

he was rich; he did not aspire to speak with Jesus, still less to entertain Him. He hoped only to see Him. So he ran before the crowd and climbed up into a sycamore-tree, from whence he might see the gracious Person of the Master, surrounded by His disciples and the crowd, passing by. And so he saw Jesus. But, O joy! O wonder! The Master stands still, He looks up and sees him, He smiles and speaks to him: "Make haste and come down, Zacheus: for this day I must abide in thy house." Happy Zacheus! He was filled with joy at this token of the Master's love. He made haste and came down, and entertained his heavenly Guest with great joy. And Jesus said to him: "This day is salvation come to this house" (*S. Luke xix.*).

III. O let us *make haste* like Zacheus to find Jesus, and let us *make haste* to receive Him, that He may come into our house and be our Guest; and that He may say to us, as He said to Zacheus: The Son of Man is come to seek and to save—*you!* What a reward for his humility, for his perseverance, and for his ardour! for him who had had such lowly expectations, to find that the object of the Master's coming was to single *him* out of this great crowd that would have hidden him from his Lord, to find that the Master was coming with the express purpose of seeking *him*, and *abiding in his house!* What joy for Zacheus!

IV. Sweet Guest of the soul. "Master, where dwellest Thou?" asked Thy disciples. Thou saidst unto them: "Come and see"; and they came to see where Thou didst abide, and

"they staid with Thee that day" (*S. John i.*). Sweet Guest, Thou takest us, then, into Thy own Sacred Heart, and at the same time Thou enterest our poor hearts. "Create a clean heart in me, O God: and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy face; and take not thy holy spirit from me" (*Ps. l.*). So shall I entertain Thee in the poor lodging of my heart, if Thou, most sweet Guest, wilt but continually cleanse and renew my spirit.

V. Jesus, how I love the words with which Thou comest to me: "Peace be to you!" (*S. Luke xxiv.*). This day is *salvation* come to this house. *Custodiat!* The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting!* *Custodiat!* Thou keepest me and guardest me always, most loving Guest of the soul. Let me hear this word: *Custodiat!* through all the moments of all my days. "For he hath given his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up: lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Because he hoped in me I will deliver him: I will protect him, because he hath known my name" (*Ps. xc.*).

VI. How does Jesus, our Guest, love to be received by us? He asks so little from us. He cares so little for externals. Our greatest efforts, our most magnificent offerings, our most careful preparations, amount to such poor and mean results. He, our Guest Himself, will feed us. He Himself is to be the Splendour and the Glory of the banquet. He bids us, with Martha,

* The priest's words in giving Holy Communion.

not to be careful and troubled about many things, but that we rather dispose our hearts to receive what He has to bring us; He bids us, like Mary, to sit at His feet and to hear His word, to choose the one thing necessary, which is the love of Jesus and a perpetual abiding in His presence. This, He tells us, is the best part; the part which shall not be taken away from us.

VII. "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus." And Martha always loved to serve her Lord actively. She served Him again when He was a guest in the house of Simon the Leper. And we love to think that this time Martha understood and rejoiced in her sister's mystical anointing of the beloved Guest with the costly perfumes—this Guest to whom she had so lately confessed: "Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God!" (*S. John xi.*). May we serve Thee with Martha, and contemplate Thee with Mary! Sweet Guest of the soul, beloved Guest, we beseech Thee, we urge Thee to come in to us, and remain with us, to make Thyself known to us in the breaking of bread, and never more, O our beloved Jesus, to leave us.

LII

THE ONE THING NECESSARY

I. "I N him was life, and the life was the light of men: And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. He was in the world, and the world was made

by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (*S. John i.*). "And this is the judgment: because the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light: for their works were evil" (*S. John iii. 19*). "And you will not come to me that you may have life. I receive not glory from men. But I know you that you have not the love of God in you. I am come in the name of my Father, and you receive me not" (*S. John v.*).

II. Judas was always rejecting Jesus Christ. He was chosen by the Master to be among the inner circle of His friends. Jesus ever showed him a particular tenderness and a particular consideration, entrusting to him a special post of confidence, which might give him opportunity of overcoming his besetting sin of avarice. We may suppose He had the faithless apostle especially in His mind when He said: "Little children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" (*S. Mark x.*). He *never reproached Judas*, as He reproached His faithful ones, Peter, James, John, Thomas, Philip. It seems as though He always dealt with the traitor with a very particular sweetness and delicacy, so that Judas, even after the betrayal, might feel confidence in his Master's love, and return to Him by penance. "Friend! Wherefore! . . ." What terrible words to hear from Love despised, rejected and betrayed!

III. "His own received him not." O Jesus, do we not see this in the world of to-day? By how many of Thine own, to whom Thou comest daily in so many ways, art Thou not received?

How many of us, dear Lord, who profess to be Thy friends, refuse to listen to Thee or to receive Thee, preferring rather to turn to the things of the world and to seek our happiness in them instead of in Thee ! How many of Thine own do not even profess to be Thy friends, but despise and reject Thee altogether, of whom it may truly be said that they love darkness rather than light. And yet they know that Thou art come into their midst, that Thou art here, come to Thine own ! Truly, Lord, the world hath no part in Thee !

IV. Jesus said to them: "Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am. They took up stones therefore to cast at him. But Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple" (*S. John viii.*). The people who sit in darkness are the people who are waiting for Jesus, the Messiah. All is darkness, silence, expectation, and unrest, the wickedness of the world is immense, the need for a Saviour inexpressible. In the midst of this gloom a light arises: One, more beautiful than all the sons of men, a worker of marvellous miracles, One who teaches with authority, and speaks as never man spoke, proclaims Himself the Saviour and proves it by His deeds. He is come, then, at last, the Saviour, the Messiah, the Great Necessity ! But they took up stones to cast at Him ! And "Jesus hid himself!"

V. Yes; Love despised and rejected of men, hides Himself. And woe to us, if we do not seek and find our Saviour again, or listen to His gentle reproaches: "Jesus said: Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. Master, say it"

—say it ! even if it be to reproach us. “ I entered into thy house . . . thou gavest me no water for my feet . . . thou gavest me no kiss. . . . My head with oil thou didst not anoint. . . . To whom less is forgiven, he loveth less ” (*S. Luke vii.*). Dear Jesus, mayest Thou never have to reproach us with receiving Thee so coldly. O give us to love Thee much, to weep tears of penance at Thy feet, to embrace Thee as our all, to give our all to Thee !

VI. Then cried they all, saying: “ Not this man, but Barabbas . . . they crucified him ” (*S. John xviii.*).

Who was this Man, rejected for Barabbas ? this Man whom they crucified ? He was the Word of God, without whom was nothing made. He was the life and the light of men. He was their Saviour, their Healer, their Good Shepherd, their Master, their King, who had gone in and out among them in sweet intercourse and intimacy, doing good to them all, bestowing daily innumerable gifts and blessings on them, feeding their multitudes, restoring their dead, pitying them, loving them, weeping over their hardness and blindness of heart. They had gladly accepted His gifts. . . . “ And they crucified him.”

VII. In refusing Jesus, what do we refuse ? We refuse to carry our cross daily, we refuse to suffer and to sacrifice ourselves even to martyrdom, we refuse to give ourselves with all our heart and will for the good of our brethren. We refuse to seek the Face of God; we refuse the light, we refuse life; we refuse love; in fine, we refuse salvation. And what do we find ?

We find distraction which wearies and loses us; we find darkness which blinds and confuses us. We find misery without alleviation or hope! "When Jesus is present, all is well and nothing seems hard; but when Jesus is absent all is painful. To be without Jesus is a cruel hell; to be with Jesus, a delicious paradise!" (*Imitation*, bk. ii., chap. viii.).

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